"MYSTERY OF THE DEAD ARM," A THRILLING DETECTIVE STORY, NEXT WEEK

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THE SAN FRANCISCO SORCERESS;

or, THE CRACK OF DOOM.

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author of "Robespierre," "Judas Legacy," Etc.

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CHAPTER I.

THE COMING OF THE SERPENT.

"What o'clock is it, Miriam?"

"It is just eight, father."

"And the date?"

"The 17th of April."

The questioner fell back in the deep chair

he occupied in a handsome chamber and dreamily closed his eyes.

The fair girl bent over him, and, after imprinting a kiss on his brow, went to the window, and, parting the heavy curtains, gazed out into the night.

Myriads of stars scintillated over San Francisco. They were mirrored in the waters of the bay and shone upon the tall buildings that beautified the great city, which today is the pity of the world.

She seemed to be dreaming, too, for she was more than beautiful in the sense men usually use the term. Tall and with the figure of a sylph, with deep black eyes, lustrous and passionate in their beaming, Miriam Richmond was a belle wherever she moved.

How eagerly her father watched her from his chair. Perhaps he recalled the death of his wife, who had left Miriam, his only child, a babe, to his keeping, and how he had promised Alice to watch over her with loving care that should never wane.

And he had done it.

He had seen her grow to stately womanhood as pure as the lilies that nod by the limpid stream. He had given her a finished education, had guarded her as he would guard his own soul from contamination, and he had been more than rewarded.

The titled of other lands had come to woo this fair girl, the pride of 'Frisco; men of his own land had cast their fortunes and their adoration at her fee, but she had refused them all.

Donald Richmond may have wondered if Miriam had concluded not to wed. She was young and the years of her young womanhood were sweet to her, and perhaps she wanted to be "heart whole and fancy free" awhile longer.

Richmond was not a dying man. A strange disease had seized upon him, incapacitating him for some duties, and he spent a good many hours in the chair.

The Richmond home on beautiful Van Ness Avenue, while not as stately as some of its neighbors, was one fit to be inhabited by a prince. Nothing was stinted there, for common report said that Donald Richmond's mines had made a veritable Midas of him and that everything he touched turned to gold.

It is well, perhaps, that the secrets of men's bosoms are not known to the world.

Donald Richmond, and perhaps a few others, knew that the reports of his great wealth were false. True, he had money, but the mine stories were not true, though Miriam did not know her father's circumstances.

After standing for some time at the window, the girl turned away and crossed the room.

"You need not play for me, child," said Richmond, stealing a glance at his daughter, who had seated herself at the piano. "I am expecting a caller. He was to be here at eight. He is a little tardy, I see."

Miriam rose and opened the door.

"You're not going to bed, girl?"

"Not yet, father."

"Were you going out?"

"No, only to my room."

With this Miriam swept from the room, leaving her parent alone there.

The moment the door jarred on the man's ears he rose and went over to a desk that occupied one corner of the luxurious apartment. His face had grown paler and more linse—it was a handsome countenance—were tensely drawn.

"That he should come!" he hissed through clenched teeth. "That this man should, of all men, darken my door! And yet I dare not say no. I dare not close the portals of this house against him. Ah! the old sin! We reap just what we sow. Tares! tares! I am the most miserable man in San Francisco, and yet I might have been happy, for there is Miriam. I might have had wealth untold at my command but for this man, Why didn't the arrow of old Cochise finish him that night on the mountain? Why wasn't he swept to his doom that time we breasted the flood in the Sacramento Valley? It was fate, accursed fate!"

He threw himself upon a chair at the desk and jerked it open.

As he did so he started, for the clear tones of the bell reverberated through the house, and he turned toward the door leading into the hall.

"At last!" he said, in undertones and closed the desk.

There were footsteps in the hall, and then the door opened. Richmond, sitting like a man in a dream, heard all this. He knew that some one had entered the house.

Presently the door he had watched so intently opened and a man appeared on the threshold.

There was a look of recognition, swift and fleeting, between the two men.

"Come in," said Donald Richmond.

The visitor came forward, a sinister smile on his proudly handsome face and ill concealed triumph in the depths of his steel gray eyes.

These orbs were fastened upon Richmond.

He reached out his hand, which Richmond took, and the brief clasp had nothing of genuine friendship in it.

"I am glad to see you," said the caller. "You're looking well, Richmond."

"Am I? Then I am better than I feel," with a little smile. "You haven't been in the city long."

"No," and the speaker was evidently lying, though he had wonderful power in concealing his emotions. "You got my message?"

"Yes."

"I couldn't get here on the hour, but better late than never, you know."

He took a chair near Richmond and crossed his legs.

He was younger than the occupant of the house on Van Ness Avenue.

There was at least ten years between them in favor of Cidd Selden.

Richmond seemed to lapse into silence, for he watched his visitor closely, waiting for him to open up on the matter which he knew in his heart had brought him to the house that night.

"You are quite alone, eh?" said Selden. "In this part of the house, at least," was the reply. "Miriam is at home——"

"Ah!"

"She is up stairs in her own rooms. We are alone here," and Richmond waited again.

Cidd Selden, sport, man of the world and merciless as his grey eyes showed, leaned back in his chair and for a moment studied the face before him.

He seemed to be gloating over the triumph in prospect. He was a serpent watching the dove or the rabbit within its coils.

"By the way," said he, "I haven't seen Miss Miriam lately."

"No? It is not necessary to call her down."

"Not now, at least."

Selden seemed to laugh within himself.

"What is it you want?" asked Richmond, with the air of a desperate man.

"There is one thing a man always wants—a woman," was the reply, and the words

stung Richmond like the point of a snake's tongue.

"But——." He stopped suddenly and glared at his visitor, upon whose face sat a smile that would have done credit to a Nero.

"Come, Donald. I guess we understand one another. It's not necessary to go back and rake up the past. You can recall it with little effort, and sometimes probably you do."

There was no reply.

"You ought to be able to guess why I'm here," continued Selden. "I want your daughter!"

"My—Miriam? The only child I have, the one thing that links me to this life? I cannot think of it. No! no!"

CHAPTER II.

IN A DEMON'S POWER.

Clidd Selden did not start nor look surprised. He merely changed to the other leg, as if what was being enacted before him was the most matter-of-fact thing in the world.

"Will nothing else do?" asked Donald Richmond, at last.

"I guess not."

"Miriam may have a lover——"

"I care not if she has a dozen," was the cool interruption. "I simply want the girl."

"I have never consulted her wishes——"

"Oh, they don't go in this transaction. You know that, Richmond. I hold the winning cards and all the world can't trump me." He looked at his watch. "I can't remain here long, as I have another engagement. I made this appointment to say that I want your daughter and that your consent must be in my hands—or your refusal, if you're fool enough to give that—before I quit this house."

A spasm of pain swept over Richmond's frame. He grew white and seemed to shiver.

"I never thought you would ask that much," said he. "You do not know how dear the girl is to me——"

"We'll not discuss that point. I dare say you have some affection for her. That would be no more than natural. I saw her on the street the other day, or a girl whom I took for her, and she's quite captivating."

"She is as good as she is beautiful," said Richmond, proudly.

"So much the better. She will make Clidd Selden a banner wife. I heard before I came back to 'Frisco that she was a beauty."

"You heard it? Where?"

"In Denver, for one place, and in the camps."

"The camps?" echoed Richmond.

"Yes; to be precise, I heard it in the Laughing Susan Saloon in the Hills."

Richmond's cheeks changed to crimson, but soon went back to their pallor.

"My God, man!" he cried. "Will no other sacrifice do you?"

"None other will do," said Selden, icily. "I am wasting precious time here. I want the girl—Miss Miriam. What is your answer, now, Donald?"

Intense silence for a moment settled over that room.

Richmond clenched and opened his hands. He knew he had been driven to the wall by the merciless man before him. He knew that he was in this man's power; that he dared not resist, even though he loved his child as he loved his life.

Selden waited, taking a cigar from its case and lighting it cooly. For a girl like Miriam Richmond he could afford to wait. Jacob waited seven years for Rachel.

Suddenly Donald Richmond rose to his feet and crossed the room.

Clidd Selden seemed to divine his intention. He was going to summon Miriam herself.

"Don't call her down," he said in commanding tones. "I don't want to see her just yet. We'll get acquainted by and bye."

"But Miriam ought to have a say in this matter——"

"Say? H——l!" cried Selden. "We are making the bargain; she is the goods, nothing more. No, you don't bring the girl in yet. What is your answer?"

Richmond came back across the room with his eyes fixed upon his visitor and stopped in front of him.

For a moment he looked like a tiger about to spring, and Selden, catching the furious glitter in his eyes, drew back as if he expected a leap.

"You're as merciless as Satan!" hissed Richmond." You have the heart of a Nero. Gods! had I known this——"

"You would have finished me in the old valley, eh?" laughed Selden.

"Well, you would not be here tonight robbing me of the one joy I still possess."

"Then I may consider myself fortunate. You give the girl to me?"

"I haven't said so."

"No? Then let the world see Donald Richmond standing in his own true garb before it. Let the world know that——"

Richmond threw up one hand with a deprecating jesture.

"Stop! fiend, devil!" he cried. "Miriam is on the stairs. She is coming down."

Clidd Selden drew back.

"Remember, I don't care to see her now," he said, hurriedly. "I'll see her later on. Is yonder door fastened?"

"Yes."

"Good! Now your answer."

"I'll make over to you everything I have in this world," began Richmond, when he was interrupted by the man in his presence.

"I'm rich enough. I don't want another dollar of the world's tainted gold. I could build a half a dozen palaces on Nob Hill and rear more than one sky scraper on Markt street."

"I can't do that," said Richmond. "But I possess a treasure of which you would rob me."

"It's the girl, of course?"

There came a soft, rather timid knock at the door.

The men looked at one another.

"Don't let her in," said Selden, clutching Richmond's arm. "If you do I'll make her shrink from you as she would from one of the lecherous beasts of China Town. Keep her out. My answer now. What is it?"

"Selden, I cannot."

"Very well," replied the other, with the coolness of Mephistopheles. "I'll play my hand, then. Good night, Richmond. I did not take you for a fool."

Donald Richmond gasped and staggered toward the desk in the corner.

By touching a spring there he could flash open a drawer in which lay a revolver ready to his hand.

It might save Miriam from the embraces of this man. It would at least keep the one secret of his life he wanted kept.

"No!" cried Selden, interpreting the glance toward the desk. "You will answer at yon table. I see there are writing materials on it. And there's a chair handy, too. Go over there, Donald, and write and sign the compact."

Richmond nearly bit his lips through.

The woman's knock sounded again on the door.

"Papa! papa, dear!" said a sweet voice in the hall.

"In a few moments, dear," answered Richmond. "I'll be through here then and——"

"I'll come back then," interrupted him, and footsteps moved away from the door.

Donald Richmond went over to the table, followed by his cool-headed visitor, who watched him like a tiger. He dropped into the chair there, drew writing materials toward him and looked up into the face above him.

Clidd Selden dictated a moment or so and Richmond dased his name at the foot of what he had written.

"There!" he cried, as he pushed the document toward his insatiate caller. "May I burn a million years in Tartarus for this act!"

"It'll be your burning, not mine, Richmond," chuckled Selden, as he folded the paper, having read it carefully. "I'll see you later. How are you going to let me out without coming in contact with the future Mrs. Selden?"

That's easy," was the reply. "This way, man."

Selden crossed the room at Richmond's heels. The tenant of the Van Ness home threw up a sash revealing a porch shaded with vines gorgeous with California flowers, and pointed out into the night.

"Good bye," said Selden, as he stepped across the sill. "I'll see you later."

There was no answer.

Ricmond lowered the sash as he heard his visitor step from the porch, and turned toward the interior of the parlor.

In another instant he had unlocked the door leading into the hall and then he fell back with a cry.

Miriam stood before him, the tall girl in her fresh beauty of face and figure, the fair being whom he had given to this man-devil called Clidd Selden. She stepped into the parlor with a light laugh which brightened her dark eyes.

"I only wanted to say good night, papa," she said. "Your visitor is gone, I see. Oh, yes, I forgot to say that Mr. Tredgold came back today. You know—Howard. We are good friends and he is one of the nicest men in the world."

Richmond shivered. Miriam's heart belonged to Howard Tredgold!

CHAPTER III.

THE VEILED SEERESS OF 'FRISCO.

At the period of the opening of our story—just before the terrible doom that befel the City of the Golden Gate—there stood in Washington street a building that sheltered a person known to many as the Veiled Seeress of 'Frisco.

Of the hundreds who had consulted her mystic powers not one had looked upon her face.

Some asserted that she was a beautiful young woman, whose face was entrancing beyond the description of pen; others with the same emphasis said that she was hideous in features, which was why she hid her face from the world.

Madame Vera, as she was called, let the world speculate about her looks while she took money from those who visited her. She had many callers. Some of the fashionables of Nob Hill came to her elegant apartments on the third floor of the handsome building, and now and then a resident of the poorer quarters was found looking into her "magic mirror."

She coined money day by day, and it is but just to say that she could tell strange events in the past of her patrons, and some of her prophecies had been fulfilled.

On the night of the interview between Donald Richmond and Clidd Selden, but some time later, the door of Vera's apartment opened and a man strode into the room.

The place was quite empty. Everything denoted wealth, for the furnishings were grand, and it was evident that the seeress was on the highway to prosperity.

The man, who was a little past forty, stopped in the middle of the room and looked curiously around.

"Fine nest, this," said he, half aloud. "Dupes must be abundant in 'Frisco. The old gal is stripping them in great shape. She is certainly up-to-date in the art of fleecing."

Just then a door opened without the slightest noise and the man found himself in the presence of the strange reader of the future.

A smirk of incredulity appeared for a moment at the corners of his mouth as he turned upon the woman whose face was veiled. Her figure was commanding and suggested youth, but the veiled face stopped the would-be investigator on the threshold of his work.

"Colonel Hargraff is welcome," said the unseen lips, at which the man started. "How are the cliffs of Dolan?"

The man fell back a step, with color fleeing from his face, and gazed speechless at the woman.

"You must have some strange powers," said he at last. "Or else you are a good guesser."

"I never guess in my calling," came from behind the veil. "I am Vera, the Occult Queen."

"So they call you, at least."

The seeress came a little closer.

"Wouldst witness an exhibition of my powers?" she said, leaning slightly toward her caller. "Wul Col. Hargraff turn and look into the Magic Mirror?"

"Anytning to please you, my dear," said the man with a laugh. "I am the most obliging person in the world, especially to ladies."

Upon a stand not unlike an easel, stood a large mirror half veiled in black.

Vera stepped over to it and drew the covering aside, then, after a few canalistic passes with her left hand, bade Hargraff draw nearer and look.

The man obeyed.

Suddenly he started back and turned upon the woman who posed in the center of the room.

"What devilish magic is that, anyhow?" he cried.

"Devilish magic, is it?" said Vera. "You have seen something in the mirror?"

He did not answer her.

"What was it, Colonel?"

"I—I saw— Never mind what I saw."

"Look again, please."

Once more the man turned to the mirror and looked again.

"Look steadily. It takes a little time to bring the dead to life," said Vera with a little laugh.

"By Jove! you are a witch!" was the reply, as Hargraff fell back the second time and confronted her. "In the name of sin, where did you obtain that power?"

Before she could reply a bell in another part of the house tinkled, announcing another visitor, and Vera turned away.

Hargraff was left alone.

"This is the devil's own magic," he exclaimed. "I'll investigate a little while the she-devil is out."

He reapproached the mirror and looked behind it. There was no subtle machinery visible, nothing of the sort; the back of the mirror, so far as he could see, was like the backs of others, but there was the picture that had startled him. Whence came it? How could that seeress bring out of his life the one thing he would have concealed forever?

He placed one hand on the top of the frame and uttered a wild cry.

It seemed to him as if a thousand volts of electricity had pierced him. "Aha! she's up to date with her foolery," he said to himself as he fell back. "She brings electricity forward to help her. I see! But what is this?"

Something shone at his feet like a diamond and the next instant he had touched it.

There was a second cry and the body of Col. Hargraff dropped to the floor as if he had been struck upon the head. His hand still clung to the shining object and his muscles writhed and grated, as it seemed, from demoniac tórture.

How long he lay there he did not know. The first sound he heard was the voice of the Occult Queen.

"Arise, my dear Colonel," she said. "You need not grovel on my floor."

In an instant all pain left him and he stood upon his feet.

"Your infernal electric batteries treat your patrons well," he exclaimed. "Do they ever kill?"

"My batteries?" was the reply. "Really, I am in the dark, Colonel."

"Come," and Hargraff drew his purse. "How much for what you have done?"

"Not a penny."

The voice behind the veil was cold and full of haughtiness.

"I am not a beggar," continued Hargraff. "I am able to pay my way," and he drew a crisp bank-note from the pocket-book.

"No!" and Vera waved her hand. "You may need that for funeral expenses."

"I have plenty for that," laughed the man.

"You will see the time when you will give all your boasted wealth for one second of life, for a rope and a swallow of water. In the doom of this city you will find your own."

"The doom of San Francisco? pshaw!" cried Hargraff. "There is no handwriting on the wall yet."

"None? Look at yon wall."

Vera had drawn herself to her full height, which heightened her magnificence of form, and pointed toward the opposite wall. Hargraff turned instinctively and gazed.

At first he saw nothing, then some clouds seemed to flit over the wall, and when these had vanished characters began to appear thereon.

"It's a companion to your mirror, eh?" he said, with a quick glance at the seeress. "Some more charlatanism."

"Look!"

As we have said, certain characters came out slowly on the surface of the wall. The letters had a darkish hue and seemed to have been written in blood.

"The days of San Francisco have been counted," he read. "Let the wise understand and the fool die the death!"

Hargraff laughed incredulously. The characters vanished and the wall became clouded again.

"What was that you said about my being willing to give all my wealth for a sup of water?"

"Wait and see. Thy days, like those of this beautiful city, are numbered. You come here as Col. Hargraff. At the Brunswick they know you as Clidd Selden!"

"And you? What sort of face do you carry behind your infernal veil?"

The man darted toward Vera, the seeress, and his hands shot madly out, but that moment she vanished as if she had instantly dissolved in air.

CHAPTER IV.

A HORRIFIED LOVER.

Vera's words were true. At the Brunswick Hotel Col. Hargraff was known as Clidd Selden.

After departing from the house of mystery on Washington street Selden went to his apartments.

He seemed to have had adventures enough for one night. He carried on his person the compact he had forced from Donald Richmond and laughed at the tricks of the Occult Queen.

In passing through the foyer of The Brunswick he heard his name called and turned to greet a handsome young man who advanced to meet him.

"By George! Tredgold, when did you blow into the city?" exclaimed Selden.

"I came in early in the afternoon. We were delayed by a little wreck that did not amount to much. How's everything?"

"In fine shape," answered Selden, as his steely eyes looked the speaker over from head to foot. "You've hit it rich, I hope, Tredgold?"

"I've done fairly well," was the response, and the young man smiled. "Mining is rather tricky, you know."

"But the business has been good to me."

"I'm glad to hear it. You still operate the El Dorado leads?"

"Yes, and have added to them. But won't you come up to my room, Tredgold? Was just going up myself."

"I don't care if I do, since you're about the first acquaintance I've struck since getting in."

"Then I'm lucky," and Selden led the way to the elevator, in which the couple ascended to the floor where Selden had rooms.

"What have you in prospect, Tredgold?" asked Clidd, when they had seated themselves at the tables, upon which stood two bottles of the best wine the presses ever ran." I mean, what are you going to do in 'Frisco?"

"Nothing in particular," was the reply. 'I thought I'd take a look at the city again."

"You're not married yet?"

"No, and I'm half ashamed to say that there's but little prospect of my giving the parson a job very soon."

"You ought to have a wife, Tredgold. A handsome young fellow like yourself should not waste his sweetness on the desert air, as Gray says, ha! ha!"

"What about yourself, Selden?" asked Tredgold.

"Oh, I'm on the eve of my wedding."

"The— deuce you are! If it's no secret, who is the fortunate woman?"

"I don't care to disclose that just yet. Indeed, I haven't said anything to the young lady, but I've just settled the matter with her father, and that's enough."

Young Tredgold's face grew sober.

"Is that all that's required nowadays?" he stammered.

"That's the way I do things."

"And the heart of the bride-to-be is not to be consulted?"

"Not for a minute."

"Well, I must remark that it is a remarkable wooing. I could never woo that way."

"Oh, you would lay siege to the young lady's heart and await her decision?"

"Most assuredly!"

"It's not Clidd Selden's way," and the speaker broke into a laugh almost boisterous. "I've got the compact right here," and Selden touched his left breast. "The ink is not dry upon it yet, but everything goes with me. I say Tredgold, there's money in this old Spanish town."

"Millions! I know that."

"And you are going back to the mountains to make or break there?"

"Perhaps."

"Why not try our veiled fortune teller first and know what the future has in store for you?"

"You refer to Madame Vera?"

"Yes. She's great."

"I never had any time for the mysterious," smiled Tredgold. "I have been too busy to tamper with the occult. I have heard of this woman. She is said to have strange powers, which could, no doubt, be accounted for."

Selden said nothing. He did not deem it necessary to refer to his own visit to Vera's place, nor to recount the adventure of the magic mirror and the writing on the wall.

At last Tredgold pushed back his chair and rose to his feet.

"It's not late," said Seldon. "Better make a night of it here."

"Thanks, but I can't think of that," was the response. "I must be going."

"Where are you?"

"At The Palace."

"I like this place better," said Seldon. "It's not quite so stylish, more home-like, and I can amuse myself better here. My favorite theater is close."

"Well, good night."

"Just a minute, Tredgold," cried out Selden, whose face had suddenly grown pallid.

The young man halted in the middle of the room.

"You're my friend, aren't you, Tredgold?" Selden's voice was a little husky from the wine he had drank.

"You know I am, Selden."

"Then I can trust you," and Clidd's hand moved toward the pocket over his heart.

"Don't betray any secrets to me. I don't care to be their custodian," put in the young man.

"I'll do as I please," with a little assertiveness. "I know what I'm at."

"You're certainly old enough to know."

"I want to show you the compact between me and the girl's papa. It's got the governor's signature good and strong."

"I don't want to see it," said Tredgold, pushing back Selden's hand. "It's none of my business."

"Well, it's mine," was the next response from Selden. "You may know the old duffer. Had a time getting the compact, but he came round in good time. It takes Clidd Selden to carry out such little affairs. I've got millions, and I think of building a palace on Nob Hill for my bird when I've fairly caged he——"

"Look here, Selden, I'll hear you some other time," broke in Tredgold, somewhat disgusted with Selden's talk. "To be plain, I don't think you're treating the girl right. She may have a preference——"

"Preference? thunder!" roared Clidd. "Love and preference didn't enter into the bargain. I've bought the girl. It's plain

words, but it's true. She didn't have to be consulted. I bought her with the silence of Cildd Selden. There!"

"Oh!" cried Howard Tredgold. "Then you have a secret which the father is deeply interested in?"

"Haven't I?" and Cildd fairly roared in his wicked laughter.

"Well, it's a dastard's trick, that's all!"

The eyes of Tredgold seemed to emit sparks of fire. Not only was his indignation thoroughly aroused, but something through his blood like a flame, but he was disgusted with Selden's rascality.

"What's that?" cried Selden, taking up the brand at once. "You must beware, Tredgold. I'm a gentleman and must resent"

"By George! I doubt it now, after what I've heard of your wife hunting."

In another moment, with a furious oath, Selden launched himself squarely at Tredgold, but he found his master in the young mine investigator.

As the hand of Cildd shot forward it was dextrously turned aside, and the light blow —more of a slap—which Tredgold administered sprawled the fellow on the floor.

It was not the blow that rendered Selden unconscious, but the striking of his head against the floor. Tredgold looked down at

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Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves the complexion and the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving the skin in condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and ladies are now using it and are more than delighted with the results.

Send ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost, or not doing, but write at once. Box 491, Bisbrville, Pa.

A Hint to the Police.

The police department of Springfield, Mass., publishes a "daily paper," measuring seven by nine inches, in which all matters of interest to the members are briefly noted. Its circulation is strictly limited to the members of forces. It is called Lookouts.

The editor seems to be a humorist unsuspected by himself. The other day, when a citizen asked the police to keep a watchful eye on his residence, which had to be left temporarily in charge of a female servant, Lookouts made a note of the fact thus:

"Mr. ——— asked that a lift own for a period. The house is in charge of a maid who is nervous and thinks the burglars can beat please call there as often as possible."

ONE FARE PLUS ONE DOLLAR

Chicago to Boston & Return Via New York or Direct Route

The Lake Shore will sell on May 31st to June 9th, inclusive, tickets to Boston and return at above rate. Return limit by direct route, July 15th—Stopover at ten days at New York on return trip on tickets reading via New York. Write L. E. Vosburgh, G. W. P. A., Chicago. Warren J. Lynch, Passenger Traffic Manager, Chicago.

REPARTEE.

He turned and gazed at her, and she Resented it right scornfully.
In hopes to make amends, said he
(With weak attempt at gallantry),
"I'd like to add to my family tree
A branch so fresh and green as see."
she sneered, "I don't care to be
Ingrafted on a rubber tree!"

A Dainty Little Maid.

Everyone ought to have her. She is dressed in pretty colors and changes the color of her skirt herself when it is going to rain. She indicates when it is wise to take an umbrella so you can do so without. She is the simplest and best of barometers. She is an ornament, a good seller for agents, a pretty gift, a good business souvenir and useful to anyone. She or one of her sisters comes postpaid with full directions for only 10 cents. W. P. Randolph & Co., 76 Dearborn St., Chicago.

WHY HE CLOSED.

A youth went forth to serenade
The lady he loved best.
And by her house at evening,
When the sun had gone to rest,
He warbled until daylight
And would have warbled more,
But morning light disclosed the sign
"For Rent" upon the door.

A Money Maker's Letter

WATERBURY, Conn., April 21, 1906.

NEW MEXICO CO., Chicago.

Enclosed you will find $10 orders for the past week. I had that I have sent you over 500 orders for your engraved silver points during the past six weeks and I have only started work. Several friends have asked for your address and have promised to write for your exclusive territory proposition since they found how much money I am making.

Yours very truly, J. S. C.

Engraved silver names and number door plates are the latest fashion in the cities and our low prices give our exclusive territory representatives a princely income. If you want an opportunity to make big money quickly write for full information today and get started before some one gets the territory you want.

New Method Co., 5705 Prairie Ave., Chicago

His One Regret.

Swiggs—I wish I was about three feet taller than I am.

Biggs—Because why?

Swiggs—The doctor says whisky is killing me by inches.

him in silence a few moments. He saw that the paper Selden had taken from his pocket-book had fallen beside him.

His curiosity guided his hand to it and he opened it with a smile, but in a moment, one that sent every drop of blood to his head, he read the words that the agreement of Donald Richmond to give Miriam, his child, to Cildd Selden.

"Miriam? Miriam?" cried Tredgold. "My God! it shall not be!" and throwing the accursed paper away, he bounded from the room.

CHAPTER V.
TREDGOLD ATTEMPTS TO SAVE.

Not one of the many thousands who inhabited the City of the Golden Gate upon the night of the opening of our story dreamed that the galaxy of stars that looked down upon it would, in the near future, shower their light upon a mass of ruins.

The days of beautiful San Francisco were numbered, as foretold by Vera, the sorceress. Her great buildings within a few moments were to become the awful earthquake's shock, and the fire fiend was to complete the work of destruction.

Howard Tredgold, after fleeing from the room of Cildd Selden in The Brunswick, with the knowledge of Donald Richmond's, set burning a hole in his overwrought brain, as it were, and he must have gone to sleep.

He went down upon the street thronging with the crowds, but he was not aware of it, for his mind was terribly distraught and he looked like a madman.

Had he come back to Frisco for this? Had he returned to the city by the sea to turn fiend himself and see the lovely maid sold to this insatiate and vengeful monster? For he could not believe her in this condition light.

He knew the man, knew him for a remorseless libertine, a man of wealth and power, and Cildd Selden's reputation was known.

Why had he not remained in the mountains, which were making him rich? Then he would not have known of this fiend's fiendish bargain and sale of purity and loveliness.

But what was the secret which Selden held over Richmond's head?

And why had the latter of Van Ness Avenue been willing to give up his child to this fiend in human shape?

No wonder that his brain was on fire.

At last he calmed down a little, but he was still distraught when he reached the hotel.

When he came fully to his senses he found himself in the office, having left that from the home of Miriam.

The hour was not late for the tenants of that thoroughfare. Like the wealthy, they kept all hours, and he doubted not that he would find Richmond there.

Fate seemed to be guiding him to the home of the man he sought.

When he paused it was in front of Miriam's home.

He looked up at the house and his breath seemed to die from his body.

Then he thought of turning toward his hotel and wait till the morrow before he plead for admittance—and for Miriam—with his terrible discovery, and then, calm, would seek Donald Richmond and appeal to him. Why he had permitted Selden to triumph.

After some moments of self-communing, he went up the steps and rang the bell, for more like one in a dream than like a person wide awake.

The sound of the bell grated strangely on his ears.

It was answered by a series of footsteps in the hall beyond, and the door opened.

Howard saw the figure of a servant as if he would reprove his audacity.

"Is Mr. Richmond in?" asked the young mine owner.

"Yes, sir, but"

"Never mind," interrupted Howard, stepping inside. "I have business with him."

"It is late, sir, and"

"I have been told that I may" cried Tredgold, pushing the man and reached a door that led from the hall.

In another moment he had opened it, and on the threshold he stopped and gazed at the scene before him.

The library was occupied, but its occupant lay on the floor at the foot of a chair.

Mr. Richmond, the banker, instantly benefited. "What has taken place here?"

The man, who had called the caller, "Is this a tragedy? And have I arrived too late to prevent it?"

As he turned the body over he saw that it was Richmond.

But the following moment his heart gave a slight flutter of joy, for the man was still alive, though breathing heavily.

He carried Richmond to a sofa at one side of the room and laid him thereon to.

Then Richmond opened his eyes and looked vacantly about him.

"'Tis I," said Tredgold. "I am Howard Tredgold. I have just arrived in the city and"

"Why did you come? It is too late!" Tredgold caught at once the importance of Richmond's words.

It was all too awful bargain and sale, the price of some terrible secret.

Instantly Richmond lapsed into unconsciousness and Tredgold sat back.

"The monster! He shall pay for this!" came between his teeth. He felt sure that vengeance overtakes Cildd Selden, from now on, bitter enemy. It will see that he never wins out in this game of hearts. The man-devil of Frisco shall not claim his purchase—and, while I have life enough left to come between him and his victory!"

He looked over at the man on the sofa and turned away.

At first he thought of summoning the butler, but cast that thought aside for another resolve.

First he saw that the door leading into the hall was fastened; then he proceeded to restore Richmond to consciousness, and at last succeeded.

The resident of Van Ness Avenue recognized his caller at last and greeted him cordially, but with pain.

"What means all this business with Cildd Selden?" queried Tredgold.

Richmond's head dropped like a dead weight upon his breast.

"Then you have discovered it already? How did you find it out? I thought it was to be our secret."

"Never mind how it dawned upon me," said Tredgold. "The horror of it has almost frozen my blood."

"But it is too late!" cried Richmond. "I dared not do otherwise. I am in the toils."

"He holds a secret over your head, and to have that secret kept, you sell Miriam, your child!"

A deep groan from Richmond's bosom was all the answer Tredgold's charge elicited.

"It must not be done. This infamous bargain shall not be carried out!"

"Would you ruin me?" he moaned.

"I would save your daughter a world of woe. I would prevent the blighting of her young life."

"You cannot. By heavens! you must not!" claimed Richmond, showing some force of spirit now.

"Why should I, I will!"

The face of the man sitting on the edge of the sofa grew deathly white again.

"He is no way out of it," he moaned. "You mean that you are wholly in that creature's power? There is a way out of it. I shall kill the vampire!"

Richmond's excitement seemed to take hope, but the spark that leaped up in his bosom went out immediately.

"Less a way out of grief and sorrow," Richmond said. "You don't know what a fiend he is, how he works."

"I know what a woman's is worth," broke from Tredgold's lips, "like the prince of vampires and he is constantly sucking the blood of the innocent. Why, I would sooner see Miriam destroyed than to see Miriam in his arms."

Terrible words, and he was soon to recall them amid scenes of the utmost terror.

"Less a way out of grief," cried Richmond. "It cannot be done. You know of the compact. Go back to your mines and forget."

"I could not forget. I could not permit there with this horror in my soul."

"By heaven! you shall not!" and with a desperate effort Richmond crossed the room and, throwing open a desk, drew forth from a revolver, which he presented at Tredgold's breast.

"Be thundered, 'or I will kill you where you stand!"

CHAPTER VI.
THE VENGEANCE HUNTER.

What could Tredgold do but obey?

He noted the light that flared up in Richmond's eyes and realized at the man's mercy. Then, he feared that Miriam, hearing the noise in the library, might come down and—no, he must not let her see them.

There was one way open to him. He would go out and find Cildd Selden. He would bring Selden with force him to forego his villainous intentions. But could he? He knew the temper of Lucky Selden. He had killed his man, and was as cool as the greatest villain that ever walked the earth.

Forced from Richmond's house at the muzzle of a revolver, Tredgold found himself on the street again.

His mind seemed to run like a lava current through his distraught veins. His lips were parched and he looked about him more like a madman than a man in his senses.

Glancing at his watch, he noted that the hour was not late. Selden surely had not retired, and when he recalled the determination of their last meeting, how he had defied Selden, he felt that their next interview would not lack for excitement.

He had no weapon about him as The Brunswick, and he went in. A call at the desk revealed that Cildd Selden was not in his rooms, and the obsequious clerk did not know where he might be found.

But Tredgold was not to be baffled thus lightly. He had resolved to find Selden if it took him all night, and he had determined else to do.

In his hunt for the missing man, now his human quarry, he turned into Washington street.

But at once his attention was called to a little glass globe that hung over the sidewalk in front of a saloon, a light inside.

"Ha!" cried Tredgold. "What fate has guided me in this direction? Why not?"

He had paused underneath the globe, which informed him that Madame Vera, the fortune teller, was in consultation at all hours on the third floor.

He had not known that he had been this close to do.

Not that Cildd Selden had ever been a client of the mining camps, how she had predicted lucky finds in gold, and how she could lift the curtains of one's past and also reveal the hidden future.

Tredgold's mind in a light humor was going up to her rooms.

Not that thoughts of Cildd Selden had vanished from the mind, for they had not, but this was a little diversion which he could not bear to do.

On the third floor another sign guided him to the door of Madame Vera.

He nearly ran against Tredgold.

The proprietor of the place stared at the man, who had stopped in the middle of the hall, and who was staring at him as well.

"Ching Moy!" exclaimed Tredgold, as he put out his hand to the Celestial, whose strange goddess of the occult!"

One hand of the tall Chinaman slipped underneath his garb and Tredgold knew that it clutched something there. He could guess what that something was.

"What is it?" asked Ching Moy, whose frequent intercourse with Americans had almost Americanized him, especially in language. "When did Tredgold come back?"

"Just a few hours ago," was the reply. "I did not know that you ever consulted Madame Vera."

A grin crept over the yellow face and seemed to be reflected in the depths of the little almond orbs.

"Why not, Tredgold?" queried the Celestial. "Why not Ching Moy when the Melican gold-barons come to the same nest?"

"That's true. You have the same right. Will I find the mistress of the black art at home?"

"She in there," and Ching Moy would have pushed Tredgold if the latter had not detained him.

"One moment!" said the American. "Since you know a good deal about your countryman, Ching Moy, perhaps you can tell me where Cildd Selden is."

Instantly the almond eyes glinted again.

"Lucky Selden, eh?" grinned the Celestial.

"Yes, yes!" eagerly.

"Ching see him in Chinatown not an hour ago."

"The deuce you did. Where was he?"

"At Lin Tung's."

"Oh, at that sink hold! And pray, Ching Moy, what brought Selden along there?"

"Makin' love to the Queen of the Roses."

"To some yellow wench?" cried Tredgold, as he thought of the compact which Selden even then carried next his heart.

"No, Melican girl. Smarter does not deserve to see the dawn!"

The Celestial drew off, but paused a few feet from Tredgold, at whom he looked with quite curiosity.

"Shall Ching tell Lucky Selden that Tredgold want him—he querried.

"No. Let me tell him. At Lin Tung's, you say? Making love to a Celestial beauty? Well, the scoundrel has come back to his natural level, and to think——"

The wretch checked himself and let Ching Moy pass.

As the figure of the Chinaman vanished down the hall Tredgold turned. There he gold went toward the fortune teller's door again.

He saw upon it a sign, "Press Button," and the bell-cord was revealed. He did so, near by, he obeyed the command and the door opened. He stood in the same room from which Ching Moy had lately emerged and seemed to be the sole occupant.

The next moment he heard a voice and then saw the veiled sorceress of San Francisco.

"Why didn't you remain in the mountains?" asked the voice from behind the veil. "Why did you come? I warned them."

"The hand of doom?" unconsciously repeated Tredgold.

"Yes. But you have come to consult Vera, the sorceress? Good! I am already cast your horoscope. It is 'yonder,' and the hand of Vera pointed to the large, framed mirror.

Curious to see what was on the polished surface, Tredgold advanced, stopped and leaned forward.

The woman stood like a statue behind him. She was attired in garments that led to envy for her mysterious color, a magnificent necklace drooped upon her bosom, where the skin showed as white as alabaster; there were gold bracelets of serpentine design on her wrists, and the gilt stars that spangled her flowing robe seemed to be the constellations that glittered even then in the heavens.

But there was that hidden face, always that hidden face that had excited the curiosity of San Francisco.

Tredgold was gazing in silence at the magic mirror.

He saw people fleeing for their lives, he saw himself running through the streets of fire, with others behind him and many before, blocking the way to safety.

It was a scene of horror, but vanished almost as soon as it had appeared.

Once more he found himself lying on the ground with terrified hundreds passing over him, with others falling on every hand, whilst the fire demon leaped from palace to palace with a fury incarnate.

Suddenly he turned upon the silent creature who seemed to be waiting for his comment.

"What means all this?" he demanded, pointing at the mirror. "In the name of God, woman, from where have you conjured up such a picture of horror?"

Tredgold thought he saw the eyes flash behind the veil and the hidden lips smile proudly.

"What is it? Tell me!"

"It is the doom of the City of the Golden Gate!" came from behind the veil.

"Then, by heaven! will have revenge first! I will find Cildd Selden!" and flinging a gold piece at the astonished Vera in the chamber of magic and went like a racing savage down the half lighted corridor.

CHAPTER VII.
MIRIAM HEARS HER FATE.

While Tredgold is standing before the magic mirror in the haunt of Vera the sorceress, we will return to the home of Van Ness Avenue, for it is the last time we shall ever enter it.

Beautiful Miriam Richmond stood before her dressing table looking at the reflection of herself in the mirror that surmounted it.

She was happy.

She knew that Tredgold had come back from the mines, for one of her friends had called on her, Miriam, informing her of his coming, and she reveled in thoughts of their meeting after months of separation.

As yet she knew nothing of the infamous bargain entered into by her father and Cildd Selden, for the latter knew the facts concerning the affairs that threatened to darken her whole life and which, in any event, was to bring about a tragedy that should never leave her thoughts.

The night was perfect.

It was one of those calm, starlit nights that are nowhere so lovely as in the Golden State.

San Francisco, with all its grandeur, was slumbering over that awful event which has terrified the whole world. The city was gaily lighted, the streets swarmed with pro-

ry thousands, and out on the waters of the bay danced the lights of scores of craft.

She had not asked her father concerning his visitor.

It was no affair of hers, and she had left the mystery unsolved since he had vouchsafed no elucidation of it.

The fair young girl must have admired her face and figure in the oblong mirror as she knew of her universal beliedom, knew that she was the acknowledged beauty of Frisco and that her hand was sought by many.

But she herself was the only one who knew that she had given her heart to Howard Tredgold.

This little secret, dear to her, she had kept from the world, even from the father she adored. In time she would tell him, and she felt that, because he worshipped her, he would approve of her choice, and the current of love would not be broken.

If she could have looked a few hours into the future, if Vera's magic mirror could have been shown her, with its terrible scenes, her cheeks would have paled and her heart have stood still in her bosom.

But it was not to be. Heaven holds closed for us the book of fate, and it is not for mortal man to turn its pregnant pages.

Miriam was turning from the mirror when she heard footsteps on the stairs. They paused and then proceeded, came on again, only to go back, dying away in direction of the library.

This was repeated several times, and the girl was mystified.

Knowing the state of her father's health, she conjured up the thought that he had been seized with one of his nervous attacks and that Francois, the butler, had come up to tell her, but, lacking heart, had gone back in his master with his tidings unspoken.

At last, unable to stand the strain longer, Miriam opened the door and went to the head of the stair.

The hour was now almost midnight.

She tiptoed to the door of the library and paused there to listen. All was silent in side.

At last she opened the door, it was unlocked, and looked in.

Her father sat at the desk with his face buried in his arms like one who had fallen asleep.

The ticking of the clock was the only sound she heard. The hour was uncanny and the heart of the girl had almost ceased to beat in her bosom.

Summoning courage, she stepped into the room and crossed the soft velvet carpet to the desk. Donald Richmond did not stir.

Miriam watched the silent figure a few moments and then laid a hand on his shoulder.

There was a quick start on her father's part and the man looked up into her face.

Miriam uttered a cry of horror.

It seemed to her that her parent had aged twenty years in a few minutes. His face was white and tensely drawn with some indefinable horror. He looked no more like her father than some imposter on the wharves.

Miriam drew back.

She could not speak; the terror of the face she had seen at its way into the very depths of her soul. She felt a chill like ice dart through her frame.

She was speechless, and the words, the question, she tried to utter froze on her lips. She tried again and again, but the voice would not come forth, as if her tongue was in the power of some strange influence.

"Miriam!"

Her father's voice had changed. Her name, so dear to him, had a weird sound. It was to her as if it had welled from some cavern underground, and she started again.

"Miriam, in the name of God, why were you ever born?"

Then with a cry the young girl dropped on her knees beside her father and took his hands.

They were cold and clammy, and he withdrew them with a half uttered curse.

What had come over him? Was he mad? What had suddenly bereft him of his senses?

"What is it, papa? What has happened? Did—"

He put up a hand and checked her question.

"Is the door locked?" he asked, with a startled glance at the portal.

"No."

"Lock it."

Wondering, Miriam obeyed, then stole back to the man at the desk.

"Listen, girl," continued Richmond. "You have reached marriageable age."

A flush stole over Miriam Richmond's face.

"I know that, papa! Have I remained heart whole too long for you?"

"No, it is not that. I had a visitor tonight," he glanced at the clock. He came to see me about you."

"For it—"

She was about to pronounce the name of Howard Tredgold, but his words broke in upon her thoughts.

"My visitor asked for your hand. He made of me a demand which, I dared not thrust aside. Miriam, you love your father?"

"As I love my own life!" cried the beautiful girl. "I would sacrifice everything for you, life, happiness, the desires of my soul, the bottom I have of them."

"My God!"

The exclamation came as a groan from the bottom of Richmond's heart.

He looked steadily at his child for a moment and then dropped his head.

"I see in you the beauty that beamed in your mother's face the day we plighted our vows. He exclaimed. "You are her image, and heaven sent you to keep green in my memory the virtues of the woman I wedded."

"You remember that I have no recollection of my mother."

"I know. But the sin I committed! the crime!"

Every vestige of color fled from Miriam's face.

"The— crime, papa?" she said, horrified.

"Yes, yes. You do not know. But I must shield my honor at a tremendous sacrifice. The man who came tonight asked for your hand."

"And—"

"I—signed—the compact!"

For a moment Miriam Richmond stood like a statue beside her father.

It seemed to her that light and life had left her forever. She gazed down at him, watching the play of pallor on his face and catching the strange gleam that lit up the depths of his eyes.

"This man!" said she. "Who is he, papa?"

"Your future lord, you mean. His name is Child Selden."

Miriam uttered a cry. Woman though she was, she had heard of him; the newspapers had been full of his sudden rise to wealth, she had read of his escapades at the races, at the dark places in Chinatown, and—

She said no more, but with a half articulate cry, dropped to her father's feet in a swoon which Richmond hoped might be death.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE COMING OF THE TERROR.

"So the trail leads to Chinatown? Will I find the rascal there? Al Lin Tung's, and the nabobs on Nob Hill. I half believe that the hiding of her face is for effect. That lends mystery to her dark calling and the unseen face accentuates her predictions. Curse the creature! Why do they let her carry on the black art? This is a civilized land, and yet they let the Celestial cancer eat into the heart of Frisco. It will take an earthquake, nothing less, to blot it out. How many lives are yearly sacrificed in those Chinese hellholes the world never knows. I wish I had the power. I wish I was the autocrat of this city for a day. I'd sweep them into the sea. I would purge the heart of this city and make it clean!"

He started as if he had heard a demoniac laugh behind him. It danced in his ears and he watched the door for an instant. But no one was there.

Tredgold sat down at the window and smoked while he completed his plans.

He had lost a good deal of sleep during the last few days. The mines had kept him awake and he had worked hard so as to get off for the city.

Unconsciously he dropped into slumber. The cigar dropped from his hand and burned a little hole in the carpet before it expired. He did not notice this, for he was fast asleep.

"In the name of God, how have you conjured such scene?"

Ching Moy said. It is a fit place for a man like Child Selden. And when I find him there shall be an accounting with Frisco will never forget!"

Thus spoke Howard Tredgold when he found himself in the street after his brief but startling interview with Vera, the sorceress.

It was past midnight when he uttered these words.

He had gone first to The Palace and shut himself in his room.

Knowing the desperateness of Selden's character and fearing what might be the outcome of their meeting, he had drawn up a statement in the silence of his apartment. He wrote to Miriam, telling her of his love. He wrote to Miriam, telling her of his love and begging her to escape by any means the toils of the woman-buyer of San Francisco.

This done, he wrote to the manager of his mountain mine, then to his parents in the East, and afterwards a few letters to a few near friends.

He was going on a desperate venture and he knew it. He was hazarding everything that he had, and the odds were all for him if the throw was against him, why, those dear to him should know why he had perished.

Through all this Tredgold was cool. His hand did not tremble while he wrote and his mind was clear and calm. There must be no fear in the venture before him. If he triumphed, Miriam was saved, if he failed he would not be alive to witness the blasting of his best hopes.

At last the last letter written and sealed, he put the whole in his trunk, locked it and lighted a cigar.

Opening the window, he stood there and gazed over the city.

"What was that scene I saw in Vera's infernal mirror?" thought he, as he gazed. "The city doomed? San Francisco a ruin? No! no! It is some devilish jugglery. That woman is a strange being and gets her means of living from her dupes, rich and poor. Why, even Ching Moy consults her. When he awoke he started, for the cool air of the early morning was on his face. The lights of the city had vanished to some extent and he caught the outlines of the coast line. But San Francisco still slumbered.

Tredgold glanced at his watch. It was four o'clock of the fatal 17th of April.

"By George! I've been asleep!" he exclaimed, starting to his feet. "I was going to find Selden, and Ching Moy said he was at Lin Tung's. He makes a night of it when he is out. Like all beasts of prey, he sleeps during the day and hunts in the dark. I'll find him before I sleep!"

He felt better for his involuntary slumber. His nerves were calm and he felt braceful and strong. He was in trim to find the man who had come between him and Miriam.

Tredgold descended to the street and hurried away.

The holes in San Francisco's plague spot were not wholly unknown to him; he had been to their dark and noxious depths and the trail was a plain one.

If Selden was at Lin Tung's, he would find him, and certainly he was there.

The eagerness that pervaded his mind quickened his steps. He saw the goal ahead, he had counted all the cost and was sure that he would force from this man-devil a relinquishment of his diabolical purpose.

Before long Tredgold found himself within the bounds of Chinatown.

He passed places familiar to him and kept on. It was not Lin Tung's yet.

The old place was asleep. The yellow hordes prayed during the darkness upon their cots. The whole section reeked with the peculiar odors which infest such places; Tredgold felt the breath of the yellow plague on his cheeks.

At last he reached a house whose sign, both in Chinese and English, informed him that he was at Lin Tung's.

He paused and observed the hateful premises. From beneath his feet, as it seemed, came inarticulate noises as of the demons of the dark underworld were holding high revel. He knew that some of the resorts were three stories under ground; that deep in the bowels of the earth the yellow plague flourished like some poisonous plants that grow only in the shade of the pit.

There was an inner watch at Lin Tung's door, as Tredgold knew. It took a knock and an inspection from within to admit any one, and he stepped up to the portal.

As he did so the door side and he saw an almond eye flash beyond the door.

In another moment the door opened and Tredgold slipped in.

The yellow guard looked him over from head to foot and waved him down a narrow corridor.

Sounds of wild laughter and strange music came up from below.

"What's going on?" asked Tredgold of the Chinese watch.

"Theater for Melican man," was the reply.

"Where is it?"

The Chinaman pointed at the floor.

"Down below, eh? I hope I'm not too late. Any Americans there?"

The watch nodded.

"Big rich Melican man down there. Been here all nightee."

"I'm in time," gasped Tredgold. "I have found my quarry."

Bidding the man lead him to the stair that lead to the underground hell, he followed at his heels.

Once he felt to make sure that his revolver was ready, and the next moment a door opened before him.

"Melican man?" he asked, with a glance over his shoulder at his guide.

"Last one, Melican man."

In another moment Tredgold was going down a pair of rickety stairs.

The sounds increased, he heard the loud laughter of Chinamen, the disgusting odors of the place assailed his nostrils, and the lights seemed to burn blue like the sulphurous flames of hades. But Tredgold kept his head.

Only once he paused at a turn in the stair to look at his watch. It was a few minutes past five.

Tredgold reached the last floor and saw a door ahead. Beyond it he would find Selden.

As he paused there a loud laugh burst upon his ears. He would have known it anywhere. It came from the lips of the man he wanted, the wretch who had bought Miriam with the price of a secret.

Tredgold uttered a curse as he bolted for the door.

He kicked it open and stood on the threshold of Lin Tung's den of vice.

The air was heavy with smoke, he saw men in the room through the haze, and suddenly he caught sight of a man who was standing above his head in a platform beneath a Chinese girl called everywhere the Queen of the Moon.

There was the belle of Chinatown.

Tredgold seemed glued to the floor by the sight that had burst upon his vision.

Had he, Dante like, descended into the lower depths through the door over which was carven the famous inscription: "Who enter here leave hope behind"?

The man holding the celestial girl aloft was Child Selden!

His evil face in the element, his face was flushed with wine, and his eyes scintillated like beads.

Suddenly he caught sight of the young mine owner.

"Tredgold! Tredgold!" he cried. "Just in the nick of time!"

Tredgold's lips come together and seemed to become one. He had found his man.

He pushed aside several half drunken Chinamen as he darted forward and faced Selden.

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"I've been looking for you," he said with singular calmness. "I want you to destroy that infernal compact. It is your life or mine, if you refuse! By the eternal——"

The sentence was never finished, for at that moment the whole earth seemed to tremble, the ground beneath them rose in horrid convulsions, and the whole building, with a dying spasm, shook, tottered and collapsed over their heads!

It was the direful fury of the earthquake.

This thrilling and extraordinary story of love and tragedy during the wild days when the Golden Gate of Golden Gate was swept by the earthquake and fire will be continued in the Ledger's next issue. If you are not already a subscriber, we strongly urge you to send in your subscription and get the remainder of this captivating story and other thrilling masterpieces that are about to appear in these pages. Boys and girls may desire our free cameras, as announced on page thirteen, and women should subscribe and receive our free patterns in all the new spring styles, as advertised on page fifteen of this paper.

IF YOU HAD LOVED.

BY WALTER E. OSGOOD.

If you had loved as I loved,
Skies were not gray today;
If you had dreamed as I dreamed,
Life had been always May.
Now I have done with loving.
Left me my heart to ease-
Passion and adoration
Dragged into shreds.

If you had loved as I loved,
What were the cold to me?
If you had loved as I loved,
Life were an ecstasy.
Now I am left sad hopeless,
Tempted and beggared and bare,
All of the wealth of loving
Cloaked unaware.

If you had loved as I loved,
I might have done my share,
Worked in my noble mankind;
But you—you did not care.
Love spoke, and I was yielding,
Child of yours was it all;
You—you—did it no garment,
Love's pall.

If you had loved as I loved,
Fashioned me you outright,
Made of my life a crowning,
Only not any night.
I then had strength for working,
Banned all Satanic praise;
Now for my life's brief telling
Only dead days.

LOVE'S VICTORY.

BY BARRY SHIEL.

"Well, there's only one course left open to me now, old fellow, and that is to marry money. I've staved off the evil day as long as possible, but I'm cornered at last. So you will probably hear the engagement of Maurice Algernon Davenegh to a certain heiress whom we know of announced at a certain dinner."

The speaker yawned, leaned back in his seat with a languid expression of air, watched the smoke curling fantastically cellingward from the business end of his cigar.

"Well, you're still single, and the Honorable Claude, looking up in surprise. "And who, if you may be so kind, is the—er—fortunate lady?"

"Miss Violet Hunstan."

"What! Old Chicago Hunstan's daughter? Maurice, my boy, you're in luck!"

"I'm sure I hope so," drawled the other, languidly. "But there's nothing really settled yet. Of course, the fact, as you were only introduced three days ago. She's quite a child, you know, and probably hasn't made up her mind whether I love—or not."

"You seem beastly cocksure about it," remarked the Honorable Claude, "and you won't have the field to yourself, remember. A girl with twenty thousand a year gets plenty of offers these days. Not but what you'd stand as good a chance as most, mind you—seeing that if the lady happens to be satisfied with a tolerable amount of good looks and a fair share of ancient name——"

"Thanks awfully for the compliment," drawled Davenegh. "Claude, my boy, you shall be best man at my wedding."

"Right! But, I say, you mustn't lose any time, old man! If I were you, I'd push the business; pile on the presents, see her every day and propose to her before anyone else."

"There won't be any pretenses about that," interrupted Davenegh, with a laugh. "The lady is to be exact, thoughtful and five hundred pounds a year, and I have—more or less—three or four moderate racers waiting sale, a cantankerous uncle with a passion for longevity, a bag of debts and—the clothes I stand in!"

"Not to speak of fairly decent conversational powers, good looks and a well-bred air."

Davenegh picked up a bulky volume from the table and poised it threateningly. The Honorable Claude laughed, and, straightening his long legs, rose to depart.

"Well, anyhow," he said, "I wish you luck, old man. And mind, I'm sure you couldn't do better, and the girl might do worse. Well, ta-ta! See you again in a few days."

As the door closed behind his friend, Maurice Davenegh pulled himself up slowly from the depths of the armchair. He crossed to the mantel, and, resting both arms upon it, surveyed his own reflection in the mirror.

"The girl surely won't expect me to love her," he muttered. "that sort of nonsense is out of fashion nowadays. Besides, as Claude says, she might go further and not do so well. After all, I'm not the worst sort they make, and I'll try to be good to her. No doubt the crudities and the accent will jar a bit at first, but I mustn't mind that. I'll have to gloss them over, pile on the jam and swallow the gilded pill. It's the only way out. Poverty and pickles wouldn't suit me. I must marry 'The Miss Igold,' accent and all. Nineteen thousand a year! By Jove! it's worth going for. Many a fellow has sold himself for half that, I'll take Claude's advice and start the wooing business at once—hang it!—yes, this very afternoon!"

* * * * * * *

"Mr. Davenegh!"

The footman threw wide the door, and, handsome, debonair, smiling, as though he had recently stepped out of a bandbox and hadn't a care in the world, Maurice Davenegh entered the room, and Violet Hunstan Cheyne's somewhat effusive greeting with a courtly bow.

The fair widow was delighted to see her visitor—for reasons. This young man was well known to Lady Cheyne had the effect crowning of a millionaire's daughter, at something substantial per month, and the promise of a lump sum down in the event of a satisfactory marriage.

It was this lump sum that she was longing to finger. Chaperoning a pretty girl was all very well, but a trip to Monte Carlo or a flutter in circles where debutantes were out of place and distinctly in the way, with deep-fringed eyes, and her heart gave a little flutter.

And when he drew a chair close beside her and devoted himself to her amusement, beginning a while's conversation, and then gradually lowering his mellow voice and talking on topics more tender, her heart beat each, her cheeks burned at the thought which caused her unsuitable agitation. But, if this man loved and wooed, how terribly irresistible he would be!

Meanwhile the male visitor was congratulating himself on the progress he seemed to be making. She could be a easy conquest he told himself; even now, she could hardly meet his gaze without dropping her eyes. What an unsophisticated miss she was, to be sure! It seemed almost a shame to deceive her.

He took his leave at last, but that visit was only the first of many. Maurice Davenegh was wise in her generation. She never mentioned his name to her charge, never broached the subject of marriage, but she always kept a seat at the opera and a place in her carriage for the young man, and never he might choose to avail himself of them, which, to be candid, was not seldom.

Thus the weeks sped on, and Maurice Davenegh's bill at the florist's grew by almost leaps and bounds. His friends congratulated and chaffed him, each in accordance with his own temperament—some but one and all envied him. He was in for a good thing, they said: with scarcely a demand for the money within a year or two dreaming her first love dream.

"Ah, if I only could divert it was! Oh, that she need never awake!"

* * * * * * *

"And it is for me?"

The girl caught her breath as she looked at the thick envelope bearing a well-known hand. She was alone, and her eyes sparkled. They were "seeing out" in the conservatory; within the dancing had just begun.

"For you," he said. "You think it is pre?"

"It is perfectly lovely. But——"

She stopped suddenly and looked at her face.

"But not of any great value, eh?"

He laughed. She turned swiftly.

"No, this thousand pounds a millionaire's daughter, and can buy what I choose; but only—only because of the thing according to its intrinsic worth."

"Thank you for that speech," he said, earnestly. "I hope you will say offering?"

"Willingly," she answered. "My only regret is that I have not received from you in turn: at least, nothing that you would care——"

"Nothing?"

Maurice took the white fingers in his own and raised them to his lips. There was a passing bicyclist.

"Well, my right off, young man!" he said, cheerfully. "It's too fine a day to be traveling so fast."

The young man, nothing loath, leaned his wheel against a fence and entered into conversation.

"The way you come in," said Private Digges, "reminds me of the way I marched into Vicksburg 40 odd years ago. Ever in Vicksburg, young man? No? Well, sir, when I went there there with Sherman I was the only man in the corps who went through Mississippi without a fall in the hills. Got so excited going ahead. I didn't know the hand reinvented, and I was just going to station the Confederate flag off'n their fort up there when I noticed the firing had stopped, and looking round, see I was all alone in the mob of Johnnies.

"Well, sir, I just rounded me away then, but I did it. I did it and lived to be glad of it, for when I went back into the rear of Vicksburg later, with Grant, and the general says, 'Is there anybody in the army that knows what the rebel forts looks like?' says I says, 'I do, general,' and he says, 'Really for you, then, sergeant, so I went,' and told Pemberton what I had told Grant about the forts, and Pemberton saw it himself any more out, and he surrendered.

"Grant said if he had an army like me he'd 'a' licked the whole Confederacy in two weeks.

"Come right in, stranger, and stay a while. Stay two or three days. Just wait till I go in and get the old woman. This is my third wife I got now, and she's the widow of a Confederate veteran. Better not say anything about the late unpleasantness, for she's a mite touchy."

Private Digges rushed into the house to acquaint his wife with the fact that there was company for dinner. The young man at the gate heard suddenly sharp and fast explosions like the report of a rapid-fire gun, and soon out from the doorway emerged Private Digges in full retreat, followed by his Confederate helpmate.

"No, sir! No, sir! I can't have it! I can't have it!" she sputtered. "It's sorry to turn you away, young man, sorry to turn you away; but I can't help it. I've got to cook. I've got to clean house. I have to go to the barn and feed the horses. I have to milk the cows. I have to run after the hens. I have to get the eggs. I have to look after every last bob and tagger on this farm—while that hulking, no-count 'possum of liberty sets there by the gate watching for the butcher. I'm sorry to turn you away, young man, but I can't do for any extra."

Private Digges leaned over the gate again dejectedly.

"I reckon we'll have to allow that what she says goes this time, young," he said, sadly. "I'see, the old woman—well, when Grant said that about me and a few others licking in the old Confederate army, he hadn't met up with some of the Southern women-folks at that time."

How Little Wifey Scored.

It is a bad mistake on the part of any poor, penniless man to think that he can beat little wifey in the money game, for it is a fact that she can beat all the tricks every time and still have a few remaining trumps up her sleeve.

Some time since a married couple were having the usual domestic discussion as to the division of the weekly wage, and needless to say that the beloved Benedict was getting all the worst of the argument thrown to him.

"After I pay the store bills," said the good wife a little strenuously, "I don't have a cent left, and you know it! I never have anything for myself, and if I want a pound of candy or the price of a matinee ticket I have got to practically rob the benevolent deacon and prayerfully beseech you to—"

"Now, dearest," interrupted the husband meekly, "you know——"

"Of course I know," broke in little wifey, "I know only too well that I get a cent over the actual expenses, and unless I can have something to spend for myself I am going to take in dressmaking or go to work in a store."

"That's all right, dear," rejoined the generous husband, "if you must have pin money I will agree to allow you a few you every dime that comes into my possession. How does that suit you?"

"Let me see," returned the wife thoughtfully. "If you buy a single cigar you get a dime in change. Agreed! I will accept your proposition!"

From that day the husband was compelled to juggle money as he had never juggled it before, and while it is not our province to question his honesty, it must be admitted that the way he dodged dimes was nothing short of a science.

The first week the wife netted 50 cents. The second week she collected and managed to 40, but she was game and didn't speak. Then they agreed to call for a week and she instituted between 60 and 70, and the little woman was finally compelled to disappointedly murmur that the mint was not coining as many dimes as she had been led to believe.

Last week the husband had the grip, and on his way home from the office he found himself walked in his place of employment he felt too kinky to go to the office.

"Never mind, dear, if you are going down this afternoon, I wish you would stop at the office and get my salary, as I don't think that I had better venture out."

"Why, certainly, think of anything, Harry," hastily responded the sympathetic Jennie. "I can easily get it for you."

It was a fact that the bright-eyed wife returned home and cheerily placed the envelope in her husband's trembling hands.

It was more bulky than usual, and Harry couldn't account for its increase in size. Hurriedly breaking the seal, he took one look, then gurgled a gasp and went off into a dreamy trance.

The money was there, all right, but just one-half of the weekly stipend was donated to him in dimes.

Wisdom's Whispers.

The man with many accomplishments usually has little ability in the money-making line.

When a woman finds her chances of marriage disappearing she begins to preach about feminine independence.

A bachelor of middle age has an agreeable way of showing his many good qualities.

The pert maiden feels hurt when her salles of wit are taken seriously.

Some women think the bold women responsible for what comes to them in the way of trouble.

Married women have a feeling of pity for the bachelor and a contempt for the spinster.

Some women there are who think they know and add more to it to show how great they know.

No one can understand why men show so much anxiety regarding a woman's age.

When a man's wife grows old he prides than she chooses to regard him.

Men do not know what women have the best end of life they would not care to change places.

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Many light-weight men are built on a large scale.

Air castles of a bachelor are usually constructed of smoke.

Many a charitable woman allows her husband to have her own way.

Money talks—and it is in a hurry to say "good-by" to the most of us.

Some men are satisfied with empty honors, but the toper prefers his full.

The University of Wisconsin will suspend students for hazing. By the thumbs?

Every mother thinks her boy acquired his meanness from the measly kid next door.

All the love connected with international marriages is usually of the cold-storage brand.

No girl with a new engagement ring can understand why any one should want to wear gloves.

Still, it is a little early yet to announce with certainty that the paper trust has been reduced to pulp.

To the most superficial observer it is apparent that the Standard Oil company knows all the tricks of the trade.

The committee on the Panama canal begs leave to report progress and would like to know what sort of canal it is to be.

Everybody criticises the man who spends his money freely, but everybody is willing to take busy and help himself to it.

Of course the grand dukes retain hold of the imperial purse strings. The grand dukes know what they are there for.

Dowie's threat that he will live twenty years longer is more convincing than if he had put it in the form of an inspired prophecy.

Standard Oil's exclamation of "Never touched me!" is as convincing as could be expected in view of the tone of anguish in which it is uttered.

Whatever else may be deteriorating, the the Pullman berth rate of $2.50 per per night and the sucker birth rate of one per of minute are admirably maintained.

If the Panama revolutionaries feel that they must have some sport for their revolutionary ardor why not give them spades and turn them loose on the canal?

Nicholas' first message to the douma may have been amateurish, but it had one feature that commends itself to imitation. It was so short that anybody could read it.

Possibly the man who threw a lighted lamp at his wife did it because there was no live wire handy that he could push against her. While the Standard Oil company likes to do business, it does not recommend its oil for such purposes and the Interstate Commerce Commission need not investigate the case.

A MISLAID MAN;

Or, WHO FOUND KARL RODOLPHE.

BY WILLIAM PERRY BROWN.

[Copyright by W. D. Boyce Co.]

Begun in No. 21, May 26. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER V.

THE MAN WITH THE BADGE.

Earlier that same night, Mr. Desmond came home from his office on Lyon street than usually fagged out by sundry uproarious proceedings in the floor of the Stock Exchange, supplimented by a strenuous two hours' thereafter, on which the disgruntled "bear" customers whom his own firm were acting for at that time. Having dined with one of them in the old Astor House Cafe, he found that Paula was gone to Mulberry street with Fay. An agreement connected with that odious disappearance case, and the still more odious From Desmond's point of view—"ten thousand dollars reward." A note was on his dressing table, stating that Paula would return later on, and was in safe company.

"Shall I serve your dinner, sir?" asked Paula's own maid. "The other servants have the evening out, except Cook and me, sir."

"No dinner for me, but you might tell Cook to have supper ready against the time Miss Desmond returns. Call me then, Kitty. I shall take a bath in the meantime, and rest, telephone for her to come soon. I don't approve these night clubs in Hester quarters by any means."

Five minutes later, the tired little broker, with his handkerchief spread over his round, red face, was snoring so lustily that the sounds were quite audible from the servants' terrace below.

Kitty, finding time hanging heavy, was reading about "Footlight Favorites," a fascinating department of one of the cheaper magazines of the day, when she was called in the butler's pantry at the foot of the stairs leading to the kitchen. Cook had stepped out for a gossip with the masculine Chef of an apartment house, the back of which abutted on the alley at the back of the Desmond residence.

A hungry looking, very shabby, young man came along, just as the chef had taken his friend inside the domestic part of the basement, on some pretext or other, not pertinent to this history.

Now on the wall, the hungry young man saw Papa Desmond's unserved dinner, or at least, a part of one. The kitchen and terrace seemed to be deserted; windows and doors were open to the warm summer night.

The hungry youth looked, sniffed, hesitated, and was lost. Five minutes later, he was on the rear terrace, reaching "for the goods the gods provide." A louder snore than usual startled him from the kitchen window at the side of the dining room overhead. A door leading to the front of the private hotel across the alley, and cook came waddling toward her own quarters to rest, in time to see this hobo's absorption of her perquisites, and gave a yell as she entered the area gate.

Paula's maid, roused from her visions "in the movies" by cook's yell and the shutters, ran into the kitchen and screamed. Papa Desmond, struggling out of his last snore, was completely waked up by cook's yell and thrust his head through the window at his side, just as Kitty ran into the area. Hungry young man, having stowed the solids of the dinner still dinner into his pockets, was drinking soup from the tureen at the rate of about half a pint at a gulp.

"Drop that!" said the broker, from a few feet up the wall; and to future compliance, doubtless, dropped the tureen, but spry form upon the young man's shoulders.

The hungry man, who by right might have gotten away, had not the cook added her own avordupois to the attack. Then he began to add the maid's screams and hair pulling proclivities. Between the three of them, the invader was thrown down, and the pan cake, and soon had enough.

While they tied him for the police, Kitty noticed something that glittered among the shattered fragments of the pan cake, and, in the excitement of the struggle, which were mostly remnants of the man's ragged clothing and some of his hair, picked it up.

"I've seen that before, sir," said she, giving it to Mr. Desmond.

It was a German secret society badge, probably made in Europe, and had been torn from the man's tattered raiment, where it was pinned in a concealing manner, threads of the cloth were still attached to and thereto. Desmond inspected it, suspiciously.

The young man, having been tied to a kitchen chair, looked on calmly. After a fashion he had dined; his pockets were full of the delicacies which he could smile at fate for the present.

Cook, turning up the gas, took a long look at the sparkling hieroglyphic at the apex of the square emblem. "So have I, sir," she also said.

A sound of carriage wheels halted before the house, and presently down came Paula, herself, ushered in by the maid, who had run to the front door. She found cook, man and cook, gathering up the fragments of the struggle, and hungry looked Papa Paula, when she saw the golden badge which the broker still held up, as he queried the tramp in the chair.

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "That must be the professor's badge. All the other things were there." She pounced upon it hungrily, and the ready tears glistened in her tired eyes.

"We knew it!" exclaimed the two servants, and this was confirmed by butler and footman, later on. All of them had noticed the singular device when Prof. Karl Rodolphe wore. His clothes might change, but the badge—never. It was always in sight.

Only the broker had been doubtful, probably because his mind was much on other things, mostly down Wall street way.

"I received your message," said Paula, after some delay, and with emotion. "I saw Karl's clothes, watch, cane—all but this badge, and" she gasped hysterically, but controlled herself; and the man in the chair looked at her curiously. "I'll put the badge and—himself." Then, after a pause. "For mercy sake, who is this man? Did he fetch the pin? Has he—is—Karl alive?"

Plainly, the experiences of this night had been too wearing upon Paula's nerves. A broker is naturally a man of swift decisions. He had to be. Paula's question now appeared, and while Kitty reassured her mistress, the broker ordered them to secure the young man somewhere in the house for the present; keep an eye on him, yet treat him kindly. Cook took Paula up stairs, heard what she had to say, and, later on, sent another message for Doctor Ray to return as soon as possible from Mulberry street before going home.

This was the interrupted 'phoning, wherefore the girl at Headquarters had secured connection so mystifly Ray, when, at last, he emerged with Byrnes and was accompanied by McGlynn to the waiting cab.

Having seen his daughter to her room, for he was really concerned about her, Mr. Desmond, after a time, went down again himself, returned to the kitchen, uneasy as to the tramp, and spoke to with the tramp.

Apparently, nothing had been done, but to remove the remaining portion of the stolen dinner from the man's pockets, and form themselves into a committee of inquiry in the kitchen, with the cook's powers.

"What did you say your name was?" the broker asked, with the murderous way of butlers generally.

"Karl Rodolphe," quoth the young man, kiddishly, "but bein' as you are so friendly, it is—er—Cook."

At that time Mr. Desmond appeared, suddenly, in his slippers.

A long whistle uttered. Consternation all round was evident, as the broker, with severe eye, noted that the tramp had not moved from among his orders. He turned to the tramp, untied his arms, seated himself on a chair, and the cook's frowning look lighted a cigar, then waving his servants back, said:

"What you wish to say now, say to me. I am the master, you see. What is your name? Next, how did you come by that badge? Third, what brought you into my back yard? Be quick, and I'll see that you are treated square, savvy?"

The tramp looked, more at the pile of unesten food than anything else. He would eat more—and did. Desmond understood.

"Eat away," said the broker. "Now, first, your name; real name?"

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT THE YOUNG MAN SAID.

The hungry tramp was not without a sense of humor. He grinned, as he helped himself, the servants looking on amazed, wondering what the "boss" would do next.

"Sure, I will, sir. Me name, it is Joe Jeffson—not Joe Bowers."

The broker looked, for it was in the days of an over popular topical song called "Joe Bowers," that one simply could not avoid it, if he had ears. Desmond gazed and whistled all over the land.

"Jeffson, eh?" he said. Desmond, adopting a style of language most apt to make the Interlocutor feel at ease.

"I'm named Jeffson, and they call me Joe, sir. On the level; best I know about me name. Now, what's the badge got to do with it?"

Jeffson grinned again, as if he had perpetrated a witticism himself, by telling Desmond the truth. He continued: "The reason I fell among cads, and, instead of one other, was first on account of the badge I had found, and bein' hungry, I saw the cook had a pan cake like a badge, and so I—"

"Too fast, my man. Finish about the badge, first. Where did you find the badge, and why did you keep it, and you here?"

"I found the badge on the old Kob-dock, where there was a fight one night, and a man was killed, somewhere's in bosh, I guess. I had gone down among the old wharf rats to sleep, where the cops wouldn't bother. I heard them a fighting, and I seen the lights of a boat, just afore she went into her slip, close by. I heard a slosh, and a bloke rained up a top of the wharf at the end, and heard him groan some clothes on the wharf. I seen his face when they heard me. Shee! How they scattered. Some of 'em grabbed the clothes, and the badge, and the others pulled away in a skiff, what I couldn't very well see, 'cause of the piling.

"I laid low for a bit, for they was one of them toughs gangs long the water front, and I made sure they'd do for me, once they seen me, plain as they had heard the noise I accidentally made, crawlin' out of me bunk in an old packin' case.

"I seen a sparkle, and feeling round on that bloomin' once, I found the badge. Sure enough blood there was, too, for me hand all at once felt sticky. Soon as I dared, I struck a match, saw a stain on two where the corpses were dragged, and near where I picked up the pin. It had got torn off, I guess, unbeknownst to the gang, or they would have copped it, too, being as it was of value."

"Was you out of work—really, or are you a hobo by choice?"

Desmond was apt to interpolate queer queries at unexpected times. He was built that way. He flung this out now, apparently to induce some picturesque lieing on the part of Jeffson, who, now his stomach was filled, had more leisure to "work the thinker" gracefully.

"Always glad of work, sir. Hard to get work in this town. I held to the badge, though; was afraid to soak it at first; then, when all the papers filled me with the big reward, and the long whiskered guy as it was out about, I knew as what that pin meant. By that time, I was clean on my uppers, and looking round here for a hand-out, and to his ever's heart's desire, I hear the lady that is always inquiring round at the cop stations, with the little big B. Fay, as is at the head of the College what the missing guy belongs to, so I hear. I—I—beg pardon! Isn't that her, in the door behind you all?"

The broker turned, also the servants. Framed in the doorway at the foot of the stairs was Paula's pale face and statuesque figure, looming flimsy, yet beautiful, in her dressing gown, which the poor girl, unable to find her wardrobe, had hastily donned and come restlessly down to inquire.

And Mr. Desmond, his own curiosity slacked, rose to the occasion like a man who lunches as slightly as might be on the

"I could not sleep," began Paula, hesitatingly.

"You will never do," said Papa, with decision. "All irregular, unseemly. Go right back to bed, and wait for me. Doctor Ray comes. I have 'phoned again, requesting him to hasten. I will have no more of you without further delay or questioning? Don't let him get away, d'ye hear?"

And while the over indignant broker led his daughter up stairs again, the mislaid young man, whose name was "Bowers," was hustled into a sort of basement outroom for safe keeping, and the key handed on him, receiving but one reply to his protest, from Desmond.

"Don't you worry about master taking that badge. Better study up some truth about the way you came by it, against when Doctor Ray gets hold of you and your story, which must have been a lie,

of the badge. The college president seemed to be impressed.

"Now, my friend," said he, in a kindly manner, "you have an honest look about you, and as you may only be unfortunate your effort to misappropriate a supper will not be remembered against you, if you will agree to repeat this statement to the police, and do otherwise as we desire. I will also see that you are furnished with better clothing, have your means more regularly, and will help you to secure work, if you really wish some honest employment."

Jeffson agreed to everything without a murmur.

"Here is a dollar," continued Ray, "Have a good time, a night's rest, and after breakfasting, present yourself here at ten o'clock tomorrow morning. You see, we are going to trust you, as a first test of your future worthiness. Your return on time may not only do a great deal of good to others, now willing to befriend you, but be a good thing for yourself."

"Never fear, sir, I will be on hand. So much had luck have I had lately, that most any turn looks to me for the better."

Then Jeffson, the unfortunate, took himself off. The police looked after.

"Now, Miss Desmond," said the doctor, when they were alone, "this youth is reliable and the badge, give us another practical clue. Some of these people may saw evidently had the clothing pawned. This Jeffson thinks he would recognize one or more of the men. McCarthy will try to find others, with this young man's aid."

"Then, Doctor Ray," said Paula, "what about the mysterious boat and the man or men who drove Karl's things on the wharf, then vowed off in the darkness? How came they with the professor's things?"

"The case is full of mystery, that we have just begun to penetrate. I was about to come to you when I received your message, for I, too, have just heard something which still further complicates the case.

"What ever is it, do not keep me in suspense," entreated she, earnestly. "Sometimes I think it would be better returning to know the worst that could happen to my dear Karl than to keep in doubt of this horrible uncertainty."

"My poor child," returned Ray, with an almost fatherly tenderness of manner. "You, so far, have borne up bravely, though severely tried. Could still do so, if we must follow up each clue, however faint, so that nothing may be neglected. Now, to my surprise, I received something that, in the end, proves vital to our final success."

He took a paper from his pocket, and continued.

"Here is a letter I took from my box as I came along. Your father's last message to Mr. Ledger struck both so uncertain, by that I drove to my rooms on the way here. The handwriting and signature are both enough to be, at first sight, the writer seems so positive and his news so astounding, that I hardly know what to think. You can see for yourself, my dear."

Miss Desmond began to tremble with excitement, as the learned, yet sympathetic doctor, proceeded.

"Her it is," she cried, almost hysterical under the long strain of suspense. "Read it sir. Oh, read it at once. If Karl be really and truly dead, let me know the worst at once."

Without further comment, he mercifully began.

"President John Ray, Manhattan College, New York, N. Y.:

"Dear Sir—There is a man here who answers description of Professor Karl Rodolphe eagerly. He is an Americanized German, a stranger and seems to have no friends, though he pays his way as he goes. He has glasses, carries cane, and heavy long beard and hair, and dresses like missing man, having had shadowed, until word I hear from you. Please wire, or send, or come yourself, if you deem this sufficiently important. I refer you to the New York Chief of Detective Police, as to my own character and professional standing. Respectfully yours,

"THOMAS H. CHAPMAN,
"(Private Detective.)
"413 Pine Street, St. Louis, Mo."

Aug. 11, 1898.

"What do you think of that?" added the doctor, as he concluded.

"It cannot be!" gasped the girl. "After what we saw tonight—why, the man is impossible, or, for a chance at the reward. If he deems his information so important, he would have saved time to wire, himself."

"Wiring, and 'phoning, cost money, and this fellow may be without means. Our man, McCarthy, once said in my presence, that this Chapman was formerly one of the most trusted men. Perhaps I would better go on there myself."

"Yes, but Karl be indeed in St. Louis —out of his mind, he must be! In that case —he cannot, it we have his clothing, watch, badge and cane here in New York city!"

"There is the chance that he might have been robbed, kidnapped, then escaped; perhaps was taken elsewhere in other garb; than, in such as yet, unaccounted manner, reaching that city. Notwithstanding his mental aberration, he may have bought other suit of clothes things, from force of habit. Of course, this is all far fetched, yet the whole case, in its various bearings, is as one in a thousand. Where all is impossible, anything goes, as it were, if I may be excused the slang. I think this St. Louis clue should be carefully looked into. McCarthy can attend to Jeffson, and trace every clue here. We should not let slip any chance whatever."

"I guess you are right, sir. When will you start, if you go yourself?" Paula, rather grudged to see him leave, late as it was.

"This very night—or in the morning. I will wire Chapman that some one is going on at once. Also see Detective McCarthy, who wants us to have this fellow Jeffson meet him here in the morning. He will use him as he sees best. And now, farewell, until you hear from me again. If our friend be alive and has wandered as far as St. Louis, I will telegraph you at once."

After a few more cheering words, the learned doctor took his leave, feeling hardly less concerned on Paula's account than on Rodolphe's, his missing confrere and friend. The girl passed an almost sleepless night.

Bright and early the next morning Detective McCarthy arrived at the Desmond residence. President Ray had again seen him, and he evidently believed in having an hand ahead of time.

"Thought it best to give this young chap no excuse for staying away," he explained, when Paula timidly appeared. "He might miss his train, and not wait. If any one told him I was coming instead of Doctor Ray, by the way, he'd turn him right flat."

A shabby young man was eyeing the party from a short distance.

"Why, yes; he is ahead of time. Don't be harsh with him for being over prompt. I think he is probably more unfortunate than wrong."

"Well, we will see. Trust me to manage him. May I trouble you for that badge, Miss Desmond. Thanks. He still seems to have his nerve, so with your permission, I will meet him outside, to make sure he does not change his mind and give us the slip. Should you grow uneasy, before I call again, simply summon the first inspector. He will be pleased to make known anything near that may occur."

Then, before the girl could remonstrate, Detective McCarthy bowed himself out. He was accustomed to coming in contact, rubbing with hands in his pockets, then overt to action. Jeffson stood, "at ease," as pertaining to his immediate course, eyed McCarthy, doubtfully.

"I don't mind going in, now," and the officer laid a hand on the other's shoulder. "I am the man to be sure."

CHAPTER VIII.

ENTER, THE THIN-FACED WOMAN.

The young man called Jeffson looked astonished.

"I'm not certain that I want to see you," replied he, sullenly.

"Why not? Anyhow, you are the lad I must see, and it don't pay, as a rule, to be unsociable. Come, my boy, come."

"That means you're a fly cop, I take it," said Jeffson, with a sneer. "I've met 'em at Headquarters in Mulberry street, and take a look at some clothing that you are unlikely to get a glance at, unless this thing fell into your hands."

Jeffson gently held up Rodolphe's badge, eyeing Jeffson scrutinisingly, the while. The young man's face grew pale, and he showed a special curiosity, but quietly accompanied the detective. At police headquarters, he was shown into the garments and at once said they resembled those thrown from the dock.

"Would you recognise the face of the party who gained them?" asked Ray.

McCarthy's steely eye never left the fellow's face, but Jeffson bore the scrutiny with a fair degree of composure.

"Come, now. Give us the truth. If you recognise him, say so. You will be given a fair pay, it no depends upon yourself."

"I'd make a better living, if I had to be steal or starve with me," said he. "I'm a good hand at faces, too."

"Then perhaps you would know the fellow again?"

Jeffson nodded, then he reinforced the nod by saying:

"More than that, if ever I set eyes on one or two of them blokes what chased me out of my bunk on that dock, I can spot 'em as fast as I can see 'em, sir."

Here McCarthy was summoned to the inspector's private room, and Jeffson thought he saw the detective lock the outer door.

"He thinks me a crook, I reckon. Not much. Something will be doing here and staying can't be worse than going, being that I've nowhere to go, and no friends."

In a few minutes McCarthy reappeared, followed by a tall, thin, shadowed, unlit woman, who looked sullen and defiant, though she allowed her piercing black eyes in front of Jeffson, he stood aside, eyeing both.

"Did you ever see this woman before?" said McCarthy. "Look sharp."

"Not that I know of, sir. Why, sir?"

"Look at her closely and do a little thinking with yourself."

"I'm good on faces, I told you, sir. She is a stranger to me, sure."

McCarthy nodded, and handed her over to an officer, when the two disappeared down the corridor together. The man in the room breathed more freely.

"Now," said McCarthy, I am going to set you something decent to wear, then we'll be a man hunt. You will be the hound. Whenever you strike a trail, hot or cold, you are to follow it, and report to me where it leads, and so on. Good thing in all this for you, if your luck turns as well as for others—savvy?"

Jeffson was willing enough, and the two left the main building in Mulberry street together, without further delay.

Meanwhile, Paula nervously worried a good deal over the increasing mystery of her lover's disappearance, leaving her entire apart rendered suspense more and more unbearable.

Dark circles deepened under her eyes. Eyes usually radiant as the sparkle of sunlight on the morning dewdrops. No word had she heard from Doctor Ray, though several days had elapsed. Neither had Jeffson been seen near her, nor had Jeffson reappeared at the Desmond residence.

They calls she made at police headquarters, learning little or nothing to relieve her anxiety. The officials were unsympathetic polite and non-committal. It became simply maddening.

The Ledger Journal lay before her one day, she happened on the usual column of odd notices, among which appeared "Facts, hypnotism, magnetic healers, and clairvoyants. The latter's varied claims on the hopes and pockets of the afflicted and credulous public.

"The fact that these people are always advertising," she reflected, "shows that they must have many believers in the potency of their works."

Presently, as a sudden thought thrilled her, she exclaimed aloud:

"It will, I will! Surely, no harm, and possibly some good may result. Father is off again on one of his business trips, nor does Aunt Louisa care what I do. Let me look again."

She scanned the paper closely for a few moments, threw it aside, rose and went up to her own room. Not long after, a plainly dressed, closely veiled woman emerged upon the street, and made her way to the nearest down town elevated station. Alighting at the fourth or fifth station, she made her way on foot westward to a dingy locality lying between West Broadway and the North river. It was semi-shabby boarding house region, a relic of the days when the famous Tenderloin was in and about 16th street; when Hymen's altar fires raged and ruled in New York below 23d street with a rod of iron.

After some inquiry, the girl at last paused before a drab-hued, four-story brick apartment house, the ramshackled portico of which was studded with a dozen or more bell pulls and push buttons.

Under one of these she read the name of "Madame Slade, Clairvoyant, Spiritual Healer." In smaller print, underneath, "Consult this lady on affairs of all kinds; you will be pleased, disappointed never. Satisfaction guaranteed."

Paula smiled, for, of course, the veiled woman did not observe.

But it was a wan, anxious, unsatisfied smile; the smile then a heart-breaking than an open sob, or frown; the smile that is the last despairing deception, worn by those who grasp at straws, on the edge of sheer despair. She hesitated, wondered if she had not better turn back, even then, retreat. The smile went itself into an impressive frown, as she rang the bell loudly.

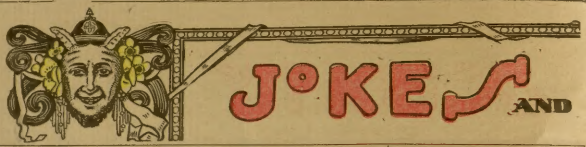
A dim, shriveled, old man in a kind of dingy brown livery, descended from the upper regions and opened the inner vestibule door.

"Will the lady please to enter?" said he in a voice that uncertain tremolo might have been the voice of a child.

"This mysterious lady is confined in such a place," Ledger. Now is the time to renew your subscription, it has exclusive news. The Ledger has other great stories awaiting publication in its columns. Its interesting, instructive and teeming with interest. The Ledger is read by over a million of people each week, and there, that death awaited me if I took a step into the cage, I felt that I must cry out to save the others from destruction. Absurd! not one of them would pay the slightest heed to me, no matter what I might come from a dream.

"But go I must, I must save him. No, he would have laughed heartiest of all at such a protest. He was mad with the wish, just as I had seen him, awaiting our entrance to the elevator, which was already partly filled.

"Speechless with horror, I drew back. A firm conviction had suddenly come to me, and there, that death awaited me if I took a step into that cage. I felt



Fixed for Life.

"I can't understand how that young lawyer lives. I've never heard of him having a client."

"You haven't? Why, he is one of the people who helped to break old Biggerson's will. He doesn't need clients."

One Man's Way.

Hyker—Ardupp doesn't seem to worry about anything. He makes light of all his troubles.

Fyker—That's right. Every time a creditor sends him a bill he cuts it into strips and uses it for cigarette wrappers.

A Weary Evening.

Jinks—to old friend in theater lobby—I notice you come out after every act. You are not drinking, I hope?

Blinks—Oh, no; but it is rather tiresome inside. I came with my own sister this time.

Almost an Insult.

"That suit you have on," said the chap who always talks whether he has anything to say or not, "is a dead ringer for one my brother has."

"Huh!" growled the fussy man. "What do you take me for—a clothes wringer?"

Cause and Effect.

She—Did you ever hear of a girl dying of a broken heart?

He—Yes; once.

She—Tell me about it.

He—Oh, there isn't much to tell. She sued a millionaire for breach of promise and lost out.

Sorrow of It.

Hal—There goes a woman who bunkoed me out of a fortune.

Ned—Why, how's that?

Hal—She's the heiress I was telling you about who refused to marry me.

One On the Author.

"How dare you approach me for the price of a dinner?" said the haughty author with the Henry James stride. "Why don't you seek employment?"

"I was employed not long ago," replied the shabby individual, "and I nearly starved."

"Hm! What kind of a position did you have?"

"I was a book agent, sir."

"And the book you were trying to sell?"

"Your last one, sir."

An Earnest Seeker.

"'Scuse me, boss," said the colored individual, as he entered the merchant's private office, "but Ah's lookin' foh work."

"Oh, you are, eh?" rejoined the merchant. "What can you do?"

"'Scuse me ergin, boss," said the man of color, "but it ain't foh me t'answeh Ah's lookin' foh work—it's foh mah wife, sah."

Drawing the Line.

"This world is but a vale of tears," said the sentimental landlady. "Even the beautiful rose has its thorn."

"Oh, I don't mind a little thing like that," rejoined the prosaic bachelor boarder, "but I draw the line at the discovery of hairpins in the hash."

Daily Planting.

"I understand," said the tourist on top of the coach, "that this settlement raises more horse thieves than any community in the west."

"We ought to raise a few of them," replied Amber Pete, as he touched his gun. "We certainly plant enough of them, pard."

Dead Once More.

"Well," said Morrell, speaking of the demise of a mutual friend, "a man can only die once, and——"

"I don't know about that," interrupted Wiseman; "I see by the papers that the youngest drummer boy to enter the Union service is dead again."

Nothin' Doin'.

The hobo approached the pompous citizen and asked for alms.

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard," quoted the p. c.

"Tain't no use, mister," answered the hobo. "Me aunt's jist as tight-fisted as me uncle an' all de rest uv me relashuns."

Facts in the Case.

She had all kinds of money and he had just as many kinds of nerve.

"But," she protested, "I don't see why you are in such a hurry about our marriage. I prefer a long engagement."

"Oh, I'm in no hurry," he replied, "but my creditors are. See?"

Can't Tell Now.

Mrs. Backfense (sadly)—The doctor has gone an' cured my husband of the roomy-tism.

Mrs. Nextdore—An' ain't you glad?

Mrs. Backfense—No; I'm not. How kin I tell when it's goin' to rain on wash day after this?

Defined.

"What is love?" asked the heardless youth, after the manner of his kind.

"Love," answered the man with the absent hair, "is an obsession that will cause two otherwise sane young persons to leave their happy homes to become flat dwellers."

Dote and Antidote.

Him—I told your father this afternoon that I fairly dote on you.

Her—What did he say?

Him—That he would provide me with an antidote tomorrow in the shape of an assignment for the benefit of his creditors.

Evolution.

The elderly stranger, revisiting his native town after an absence of thirty-five years, was trying to find out what had become of the companions of his boyhood.

"Is Jack Olin still alive?" he asked.

"I don't know anybody of that name," said the landlord of the hotel.

"Dead and gone, perhaps, or moved away. He lost a hand in a Fourth of July celebration the year before I left here. His father owned the stone quarry just east of town."

"O, yes, to be sure; he's still alive. He owns the bank and two or three blocks of buildings, and he's the mayor of the town—but his name is J. Hedley O'Lynn now."

Off Duty a Moment.

Business Manager—Chief, — Where is Brown?

Clerk—Just stepped over to the tailor's to see about getting a new overcoat.

Ah! Where's Jones?

Just stepped over to the Divorce Court to see about getting a new wife.

Family Resemblances.

She—Did you ever see the Homer twins?

He—No.

She—Don't you think the boy is the picture of his father?

He—Yes—and I also think the girl is the phonograph of her mother.

Clara—Fred's mother called on me shortly after our engagement. She says he is the flower of the family.

Maude—I guess that's right. His uncle John says he is a blooming idiot.

His Excuse.

Kind Lady—What do you mean by putting my spoon in your pocket after eating the pudding?

Sandy Pikes—Oh, pardon me, mum, it was force of habit. I was rich once and contracted the souvenir habit.

Cause and Effect

Mrs. Wedagain—I don't see why you can't come home sober once in a while. My first husband never drank a drop.

Wedagain—Thash all (hic) rt', m'dear. He didn't (hic) have t' listen t' your talk 'bout your (hic) first husband'.

Hallowed Dirt.

Matron (at reform school, to new arrival)—Come, little boy, you haven't had your face washed yet.

Bad Dick (struck by a bright idea)—I ain't goin' to have, neither. You shan't wash my maw's kisses off!

Another Automobile.

Redd—How does your new automobile work?

Greene—Well, I broke a record today.

"Indeed?"

"Yes. I was under it for three hours and eighteen minutes, trying to get the blame thing to go!"

Feminine Charity.

He—I wish I could ascertain Miss Overten's correct age.

She—Well, there is only one way you can manage it.

He—How is that?

She—Outlive her and read it on her tombstone.

Early Convinced.

"It's the unexpected that usually happens, you know," said the slow boarder.

"I guess that's right," rejoined the landlady. "At least, I know the money I expected from you last week hasn't materialized as yet."

Prediction.

Bifkins—It is foolish to waste time and money building the Panama canal.

Mifkins—Why do you think so?

Bifkins—Because by the time it is finished there will be nothing but airships to go over it.

Pressing Affairs.

He pressed his ready-made suit, put it on and called on a lady fair.

Once more he got busy and pressed his suit. And so they were married and——

Now it is his wife who is pressing her divorce suit.

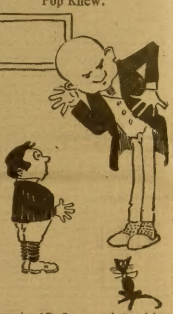
Woman, Artful Woman.

Mrs. Wisenu—How do you like my new gown, dear?

Mrs. Notnext—It's just too lovely for anything. What did you put up for it?

Mrs. Wisenu—A bluff and a few tears.

Pop Knew.



Tommy (aged 7)—Say, pop, what road does the train of thought run on?

Pop—The Hot Air Line, Tommy.

Disappointed.

"It's too bad, miss," said the turnkey at the jail, "but the sheriff took that murderer to the penitentiary this morning. The only real onery cuss we've got here now is a chap that stole a bulldog. If you'd like to——"

But the young woman with the costly bouquet of hothouse flowers had turned indignantly away.

Got Coal All Right.

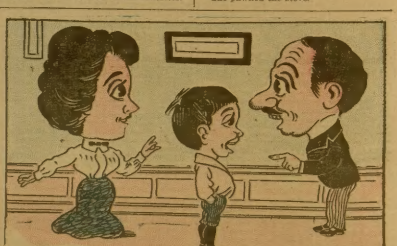
"Poor Mrs. Murphy! Sure it's in terrible throuble she is!"

"Phwat's the matter?"

"Sure she'd not a cint in th' house to buy coal wid, and——"

"An' how did she get it?"

"She pawned the stove."



"Bobby, why do you blame all the naughty things you do onto your little brother?"

"Why not? Mamma says he's too small to punish."

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JOLLITY

Very Likely.

"Who," said L'Oignon, "originated the saying about that man being a benefactor of the human race who made two blades of grass grow where only one had grown before?"

"The originator of that saying," answered Tete de Veau, "was, I have no doubt, the inventor of the lawn-mower."

The Man and the Hour.

He stood in the hall at midnight,
But the clock was not striking the hour,
For his careful touch had stilled it,
Ere the storm had time to lower.
He said, as the stairs he climbed softly,
"A hero of labor I'm like—
For surely this night I've averted
A most disastrous strike."

A Good Forgetter.

"Johnny," asked the teacher, "how much is seven times nine?"

"I don't remember."

"Who discovered America?"

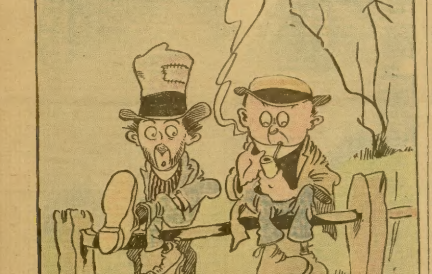
"I did know, but I forgot."

"What's an isthmus?"

"I don't remember."

"You don't remember! Take your seat, sir. You'll never amount to anything in this world!"

But he did. He is now drawing seventy-five thousand dollars per year as chief forgetter for a large corporation.



Hungry Howell—Bunghole Rowell always has some throat trouble.
Dusty Powell—It's probably hereditary; his great-grandfather was hanged.

Understood the Case.

Customer—I want to get some old-fashioned pumpkin-pie cane—about two feet long, you know, and a foot wide, and two inches deep, with square corners.

Dealer—Yes, sir. I believe we have a few left. Going to have some old-fashioned pumpkin pies, eh?

Yes, since.

You are lucky. It isn't every man who has a great-grandmother living and in good health.

Tested.

Smart Wife—Don't worry, George. I wrote an article for the paper today, showing how to get up a family dinner for one dollar, and I took it around, and the editor gave me a dollar.

Husband—That's a rare piece of good luck. What are you going to do with the dollar?

I'm going to try that recipe myself, and see if it will work.

Thoroughly Posted.

Cigar Dealer—Yes, I want a boy here. Have you had any experience?

Youthful Applicant—Lots.

Suppose I should mix up the price-marks in these boxes, could you tell the good cigars from the bad ones?

Easy 'nough.

How?

The wost cigars is in the boxes wot's got the partiest picture's.

Didn't Mean It That Way.

There is very doubtful comfort in the subjoined candid statement that appears in the "personal" column of a London daily:

"Notice—If B——, who is supposed to be in C——, will communicate with his friends at home, he will hear of something to his advantage. His wife is dead."

Bargain Chaser.

Hopps—Glad to see you looking so well, old man. How is your wife?

Shopps—Oh, her health is all right, but she has frequent sinking spells.

Hopps—Sinking spells?

Shopps—Yes; she sinks every cent she can get her hands on.

Nautical.

Gunner—So you really rode in elevators on those modern steamships? Any difference from other elevators?

Guyer—I should say so. Every time the elevators boy smashed his finger he shouted, "Shiver me timbers!"

An Elegant Sufficiency.

Mrs. Slimdiet—Have some more of the mackerel, Mr. Boarder?

Mr. Boarder—No, thank you; but I'll take a bucket of water, if you please.

Spring Flood.

"Where's the editor?" asked the early caller in the sanctum.

"Gone down the street to vote for the high license," replied the baseball reporter.

"Saloon license, eh?"

"No, poetical license. Says he hopes they'll run it up to $10,000."

Appropriate.

Stubb—It is reported that Secretary Taft once stepped on an automobile weighing machine that played a tune as it weighed him.

Penn—Hm! I bet it played 'Ah'm Gittin' Mah Money.'"

Cause and Effect.

Said the married man with a sigh,
"I've got a good mouth for pish;
But I get pains and aches
Eating those my wife mashes—
And that is, believe me, no lish."

Just a Hint.

"Does your girl like poetry, Dick?"

"Yes, but she is too insinuating."

"In what way?"

"Well, she won't agree that anything rhymes with 'springtime' but 'ringtime.'"

First Fisherman—Any luck?
Second Fisherman—Nope; can't git the blame cork out.

As Others See Us.

The Maid—Now, there's Fred Huggins. He's a man after my own heart.

The Man—Well, he's scheduled for a bitter disappointment.

The Maid—Why do you say that?

The Man—Because you are heartless.

Reason for It.

"Why, Mr. Knox," said the landlady to the new boarder, "you have let a piece of butter fall in your coffee!"

"I did it on purpose, Mrs. Hasher," replied the n. b. "I believe in compelling the strong to assist the weak."

Understood.

Stranger—Can you tell me where Mr. Jones lives?

Native—Yes, sir.

Stranger—Will you kindly do so?

Native—Yes, sir.

Stranger—Well, I'm waiting.

Native—Yes, sir.

Tested.

Mrs. Newlywed—Oh, John, I've had such a time with the cook. She's left me.

Mr. Newlywed—Why, what's the matter?

Mrs. Newlywed—She said I didn't know how to cook.

Mr. Newlywed—Well, you don't, do you?

Mrs. Newlywed—Of course I do, but I'm not going to let her know it.

Not Guilty.

Judge—Prisoner at the bar, you are charged with stealing a watch. What have you to say?

Prisoner—Nothing, your honor, except that I am innocent.

Judge—Have you any witnesses?

Prisoner—Yes, your honor, I have a witness who will swear that I am innocent.

Judge—Who is your witness?

Prisoner—The man I stole the watch from.

Increase of Poverty.

Mistress—That young man who called to see you last night, Jane, stayed very late.

Jane—It was me brother, mum.

But, Jane, I have noticed thirty-seven different men in your company within the past two years, and each one, you said, was your brother.

Yes, mum. Poor folks allers have large families, mum.

A Slim Chance.

"I think I'll telegraph to my governor for some more money," said the college boy.

"Why don't you telephone? It's quicker," suggested his chum.

"I know, but I want to enjoy the pleasures of hope for a while at least."

The Beginning of the Trouble.

Lawyer—Were you present when the trouble began between the prisoner and his wife?

Witness—Yes, sir. It was two years ago.

Lawyer—What happened then?

Witness—I attended the wedding.

In the Beginning.

"Yours is certainly an unusual case," said the lawyer, "and it will be necessary to consult a number of books."

"So?" queried the client.

"Yes," answered the legal light, "and we will begin with your pocket book."

A Model Speller.

A teacher whose spelling is unique
Thus wrote down the "days of the wique":
The first he spelt, "Sonday,"
The second day, "Munday,"
And now a new teacher they sique.

A Good Reason.

Mrs. Jones—Why don't you go to church, Mr. Jones?

Mr. Jones—Because I'm afraid I'll fall asleep.

Mrs. Jones—Why don't you stay at home and sleep?

Mr. Jones—Because I'm afraid I'll snore.

Mrs. Jones—Why don't you go to church and snore?

Mr. Jones—Because I'm afraid I'll wake up.

Mrs. Jones—Why don't you stay at home and wake up?

Mr. Jones—Because I'm afraid I'll get hungry.

Mrs. Jones—Why don't you go to church and get hungry?

Mr. Jones—Because I'm afraid I'll get up and go home.

Mrs. Jones—Why don't you stay at home and get up?

Mr. Jones—Because I'm afraid I'll get mad.

Mrs. Jones—Why don't you go to church and get mad?

Mr. Jones—Because I'm afraid I'll stay.

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Near the Top.

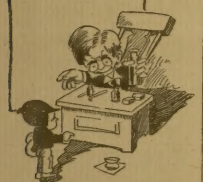
Tenderfoot—I suppose Rattlesnake Rube is one of your solid men out here.

Native—Yep. I guess the old cuss has got about as much lead in him as most of us.

Instructions.

Askit, M. D.—Did your father take the medicine as directed?

Tommy—All but the shakin' before takin', which don't matter, 'cause he's got the ague.



Prescott—Did you ever "cast your bread upon the waters"?

Hescott—No; but the kind our cook serves up must be cast in a casting box.

Old Gotroc—You spend money faster than I can make it! You ought to be ashamed!

Young Gotroc—I am, dad—to think how dead slow you are at making money!

The Reason.

He—I always keep my word.

She—Won't anyone take it?

Lord Wellington's Choice;

A Test of Maiden Hearts.

By CONSTANCE BEATRICE WILLARD.

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CHAPTER XIII.

"A FORSAKEN AND DESPAIRING WOMAN."

Misery comes to everyone, but it arrives seldom to one so young as poor, crushed Clarimonde. She had believed so completely and thoroughly in her lover's honor and truth; she had felt so completely that he loved her, and only held back through the dainty maiden modesty that did the sweet girl credit, and then, in a word, her hopes were dashed to the ground; her happiness was destroyed, and she felt that never again could she smile or endure the terrible mirth of a ballroom.

The Duke of Florence admired her pluck immensely, and wished from the bottom of his heart that it had been this fair girl, so good and pure, instead of the scheming Peace, who had stolen his love, but he knew such things are never as we desire, but a higher power arranges.

"She has played me a scurvy trick," he said fiercely, but Miss Hastings, she shall never marry that man."

"Why?" Clarimonde asked drearily.

"Why, because I love you, and I intend to get her. She knows it. She has given me every reason to believe me loved her, and then she goes about and jilts me," and he fairly snorted.

Clarimonde looked at him in astonishment, as she said quietly:

"If she has promised to be Lord Wellington's wife, I fancy he will keep her; Peace is a very wonderful girl, and his lordship thought it best not to bother the sweet girl any further, and even wished, as he was forced her to her chaperone, that he had not broached the subject.

However, the story had already spread, and Clarimonde, half dead with misery, found herself the object of much pity and talk. She heard the tones of pity in voices which used to have but admiration for her, and it was more than the poor girl's proud soul could stand. Peace would have stood it all, with head loftily upheld; Clarimonde could not, and so, within an hour of the time she first heard the news, Clarimonde sought Lady Peverill to take her away, which that lady was very glad to do, for she did not understand what was going on.

"Now, dear, what is it?" she asked briskly, as they were seated in the carriage on their homeward way.

"I wish I were dead," Clarimonde said in a cold, even voice.

Lady Peverill looked at her in astonishment.

"Why, child!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, I can't say it to you; I loved him so."

"Lord Wellington?"

"Yes, and I thought he loved me.

"So did I, so did everyone," cried the indignant chaperone, "I am sure he did; that minx Peace Gerton has worked some charm.

The line parted wearily from the little heart, as Clarimonde answered:

"She has only to be herself to do that, for everyone must love Peace."

"I don't," snapped Lady Peverill, "and Sir Andrew shall call Lord Wellington to account. It's shameful, so it is, shameful. Making you the object of his exclusive devotions, and then throwing you over as though you were nobody. He'll make him dance for this," and the expression on Lady Peverill's fair face was not a pleasant one.

"Oh, please, please, no. I would not have him know how I was hurt and grieved, for he loves her, and is the one to be his wife. Sir Andrew must not say a word. I could not live through the shame," and she began to shiver from head to foot, and by the time home was reached she was very ill and whom Lady Peverill and the footman helped into the house. For days it hung in upon that night that both girls, over whom London had been raving, lost their beauty, were lying upon beds of sickness, at an hour when both were usually delighting their various admirers.

There was this difference, however. While Peace lay, muttering incoherently, and wildly happy, for her scheme had succeeded, and she soon to be the bride of Lord Wellington, Clarimonde lay in a half stupor, muttering about the old home in the swamp and sobbing about the sulphur rose.

"How can you kill the rose, Peace?" she would ask, sitting up in bed, and extending her little hands in pleading.

"You cannot make another. It is so beautiful, just like your own purity and your sou. Peace, that sulphur-colored rose is your soul. You have destroyed it forever by winning him away from me, Peace."

Lady Peverill, with tears streaming from her kind eyes, would bend over the tossing little figure, and beg Clarimonde to be quiet, and assure her of the deep love in her motherly bosom. Again and again the girl would sob:

"There is nothing left for me but the old home at the mansion in the swamp. I am homesick. I want to hear the nightingale singing; the sound of the mocking bird; I must smell the perfume of the flowers, so many of which I have planted with these poor little hands. I want to go home, where I can bury my sorrow and try and forget. You will not forget, my love, though you have your Peace:

"Those hours with Clarimonde.'"

CHAPTER XIV.

"THE DESPAIRING WAIL OF A BROKEN HEART."

"But my dear Stanford, I feel sure."

"What am I to do, darling?"

"We must fix things up."

"I know, darling, how you feel, but this is the state of affairs. Lord Wellington approaches me, asking permission to marry Peace."

"He does not love her."

"Then, dearest, why does he ask to marry her? Peace is a wonderfully beautiful girl, worthy of any one, and I can think of no good reason to refuse permission."

"Dear Stanford, Clarimonde loves him."

"Hosing!"

"Yes."

"Well, I'm terribly sorry, but perhaps Clarimonde's fancy will die when she learns of the engagement."

Major Mannering spoke decidedly, but Lady Frances shook her head.

"He cannot have failed!" she asked, almost under her breath.

"My dear, we are some years older than we were when I first heard of that curse, and I hope wiser. We are entering upon a new century. Let us forget bygone curses and remember that we are talking about sensible, beautiful young girls, not the perfectly charming in her way. You think that Clarimonde loves Lord Wellington. I trust not, but if he does, the fact that he has chosen Peace, will cure her," and he smiled encouragingly.

"Stanford, if it were but a girl's fancy, I would not fear, but I feel it was a life love I saw in her eyes. I fear that Lord Wellington has been entrapped."

"By whom?"

"Peace."

"I will not believe it."

"I know it, for I have studied that girl as no one else has done. She is a strange, very bad blood, Stanford, and it's coming out. I have been afraid, afraid, and now I see I was right," and Lady Frances sighed and the tears rolled down her cheeks.

"Dear, dear," whispered Major Mannering, kissing her sweet mouth, and trying to wipe her agitation away, and at last Lady Frances said decidedly:

"I'm going to see Peace; come with me," and, before he could remonstrate, disappeared, to return resplendant in violet and silver, which set her beauty in a marvelous manner.

The two said little as they rolled along in Lady Frances' victoria, but they were in sympathy, for love was so great that each understood the other.

When they were announced, the Countess herself received them, and took them up to the little boudoir where Peace, propped up with pillows, was receiving a few of her many guests.

When she saw Major Mannering, she held out her arms, crying:

"Dear old Guardy, so you've come to tell me how glad you are that I'm happy?" and as he felt the clinging arms about his neck, and that little head with its wealth of love-locks pressed against his, Major Mannering could not doubt Peace's love.

"And Lady Frances," she continued, smiling upon that lady.

"So you are really in love?" Major Mannering asked, looking at the fair, flushed face.

"Oh, Major!" the girl cried with a little conscious laugh.

"You have no need to ask such a question," the Countess smiled, "and Lord Wellington are a pair of lovers for anyone. He was here last night begging me to help him to an early marriage. I suppose he will plead that Peace's ankle will need foreign air," and she laughed merrily, and Peace blushed charmingly.

The good-natured face was delighted, and he heartily kissed his ward and congratulated her. Lady Frances was quiet. There was no doubt but that Peace loved Lord Wellington, and that he was engaged, she showed it in every move she made. If she loved him, and he her, there was nothing more to be said, and so when they turned to the other bride-elect, Lady Frances was ready. She had fought bravely, but when they left, she said gravely:

"I am not satisfied; let's go to see Clarimonde," and orders were given accordingly.

Probably never before in her life was Lady Peverill so glad to see any one as she was Major Mannering and Lady Frances.

Within five minutes she told the story of the night before, and Clarimonde's breakdown.

"Except to you two, I would say nothing, but some one must protect the girl's interests, I am sure."

Lady Frances sat looking before her like one in a dream, the Major was nervous, and began walking back and forth, a habit Lady Peverill hated, but so anxious was she that she scarcely noticed what he was doing.

"How is the child this morning?" Lady Frances asked gently.

"I have not had the heart to disturb her. She cried all night long. Not like a girl, but a woman, whose heart was broken."

"Has she no pride?" Major Mannering asked hastily.

"Plenty in most cases, but remember what she has gone through. This man has deliberately courted her. Day after day he has called. His flowers have come and she has worn them, loving the dirty bits of weeds as though they were human. Night after night, he has sought her out for the first dances, and in every way showing that he adored her. I can't believe but that the boy loves her in spite of everything."

"Still he called upon the this morning, and not only asked for my consent to his marriage with Peace, but urged an early wedding day," Major Mannering said decidedly.

"I cannot understand," Lady Frances said in a low voice.

"Perhaps he was just using her for a blind," Lady Peverill said angrily, "but it he was, I shall hate him as long as I live, no power on earth shall make me break my friendship for him, as he has done."

The tears were flowing down Lady Peverill's cheeks, but Lady Frances showed no emotion, save for her abstracted manner. At last she asked:

"I wonder if I could see her."

"Perhaps it might do her good," Lady Peverill said heartily, adding:

"If you will excuse me, I will go and see myself," and as she spoke, she rose and left the room.

Major Mannering approached Lady Frances, tenderness in his eyes and manner:

"Darling, be good to me," he urged.

"Do not fear, I will," she answered, smiling back at him, although rather faintly.

"It seems so hard," she continued, trying to quiet the trembling of her hands.

"I know, but a great deal depends upon your firmness just now. Be tender, but firm. Offer her what help you will, but control yourself, if you hope to control her," the Major said firmly. In making his offer, Lady Frances knew that he had offered all he could, for it was his great longing to win her away, and as for all they were alone, she deliberately rose and kissed him on the forehead, and when her first youth, Lady Frances was very much in love with her gallant soldier lover.

She had just time to spring from his encircling arms, before Lady Peverill came back, her face pale as death, her eyes frightened.

"Clari has gone," she said, sinking into a chair.

"Gone? Where?" Lady Frances cried.

"She left this," Lady Peverill replied, holding out a sheet of paper. The words were blotted with tears, and few in number but they touched to the core two who eagerly seized the sheet and bent over them:

"My heart is broken, and I am going back to my childhood home. Forgive me, dear Lady Peverill, but I cannot stay to see their happiness. I do not care for fashionable life, any more. Good-bye, do not worry, for I take my maid with me and have plenty of money. Love to you, dear, and my only friend in this awful wilderness."

Lady Frances read this pitiful little note several times, and then rose with a low voice:

"Thank you, Lady Peverill. Perhaps, as the child says, her old home is the best place for her. I had quite a fancy for the child, and I am grieved if my future husband's ward has in any way proven false. If she has, we will let you know," then leaning heavily on her future husband's arm, went out to her carriage. Once in it, she fairly swooned.

"Home," and managed to maintain her self-control, but once there, safe at her own house, and was within its walls, she caught him by the arm, sobbing bitterly:

"He has broken, Stanford, and Peace is stronger than we poor mortals, and God help me, it is she who has to suffer."

CHAPTER XV.

"DEAD SEA FRUIT."

The season was over, and yet the Countess of Benuington lingered in London waiting for the return of Major Mannering and the baby, in order to turn over Peace to their care. She and the Earl proposed a long trip for the enjoyment of their money.

Married very quietly, Major Mannering and Lady Frances had gone away, leaving Peace with the Countess, who seemed to have annoyed their sister very much.

"It isn't enough you were children to act so romantically," she had complained, but the Major had laughed, kissed her and told Peace to make herself as agreeable that the Countess would have no cause for complaint.

"Peace!" the Countess cried, almost angrily, "she's no use at all now, so in your's is she," and Peace had laughed and asked roguishly:

"I ought to be alone with my to be husband, oughtn't I, Guardy?" and he had found it difficult to see any fault in the big, violet eyes, shaded by the gold hair, so many admired.

Yet if they could have looked into the heart of the young girl, would they all have been so sure? Lord Wellington had not drawn back, he kept true to the promise made in a moment of self-forgetfulness, but his heart was elsewhere, and Peace knew it. Try as she would, she could not evoke a single expression of love, or bring

o his eyes the light she had often seen when he was with Clarimonde.

It was decided that they were to be married early in November, and she was longing for the return of her guardian and his bride, for she knew that the Countess was tired of her, and she resented being kept out of necessity. The injured ankle was about well now, and she was tired of the dreary days, for she was unhappy.

Nature had not intended Peace to be a wicked woman, circumstances had led her on, and she had been blinded by what she was afraid was but a girl's romance.

The man she loved was not this courteous, handsome young man, who came dutifully each day, bent over her hand, which he gently kissed, and then tried to entertain for several miserable hours. She had loved the gay, light-hearted lover of Clarimonde.

While her thoughts were thus wearily turning towards a subject she had entertained for many a sad hour, Lord Wellington was announced.

To her surprise, she suddenly compared him to the handsome Duke of Florence. At least, the latter loved her.

It was wonderful what a change had come over Lord Wellington. His face was pale, and his eyes drowsy, but what was most to be noticed was his utter lack of interest in anything.

As he stood before the lovely Peace, charmingly gowned, alluring, fascinating, his face expressed not the slightest interest, although he was the soul of courtesy, and asked very earnestly for her health, as he took her little hand in his.

"My ankle is well," she said abruptly, "but I do not feel well otherwise."

"I am sorry," he said quietly. "Better see the doctor."

A sigh escaped the rosebud lips. Was it any use to try and interest him in anything she was so soon to marry? Yes, marry, for she, resolved she would marry him if it meant her lifelong misery.

"Claude," she said gently.

"Yes, Peace."

"Have you no idea what makes me feel unhappy?"

Lord Wellington straightened in his chair.

"Unhappy? Are you unhappy?" he asked, "I thought you had not feel well."

"Can anyone feel well when she is unhappy?" she flashed.

"No. Poor child. Are you unhappy?" he asked so gently and tenderly, as a man would of a suffering child.

Peace sprung to her feet, and hurried toward a window, the tears rolling down her cheeks.

"Why, Peace, what is it?" the young nobleman asked, in a voice bitterly reproaching him. Here he was devoting his attention to the girl he had come back to America to carry out an engagement entered into prior to coming to London, for so he imagined Clarimonde's absence, and neglecting the girl who loved him with all her heart, for that he was to marry.

"I am just miserable," Peace cried, and then, perfectly unnerved, burst into tears, drenched face to him.

"Why?" he asked, his arm stealing about her waist.

She drew herself away, her eyes flashing.

"Why? You can ask me that when you put your arm about me like that! Lord Wellington, how can you love in your heart for me, if you have not, perhaps we had better break our engagement, for I am not looked very lovely.

Lord Wellington knew well enough that he had no real love for this dainty creature, but he hoped that when she was his wife that he would forget Clarimonde, and he was deeply touched by her affection for himself, and impulsively he kissed her, and had so fondly hoped, he once more drew her into the circle of his arm, and bending his head, kissed her cheek, whispering:

"Of course I love you, dearest; what makes you doubt it?"

Women have strange natures. When the Duke of Florence came to Peace in his arms, and as she then believed outraged her lips with his kisses, she felt she would never forgive him, but now she was able to tell the difference. The mild, brotherly affection Lord Wellington had for her would never make her happy.

"I want you to be the happiest of women," Lord Wellington continued gently.

"As your wife?" Peace asked quietly.

"As my wife."

"As mistress of your various homes?" Peace continued.

"Certainly. All that I can do, will be happily done, to make this little girl confidently happy, as she serves, and I anticipate a long and happy life for her," he continued, straining her closer.

Peace looked at his handsome, pale face earnestly, for understand he had been when he had sought Clarimonde upon all occasions. Then his step had been light, his face had worn the flush of youth, and his eyes glowing with happiness.

"You want to make me happy?" she asked gently, softly.

"Want? I must. You have honored me by promising to marry me, and I want to make your life one long, happy dream. My every effort will be used in that direction, and he tried to smile in the old way, but Peace, who had seen him smile at Clarimonde and drank in her every word, could not be deceived.

"Claude," she said very gently, "Do you know you have never kissed me like a lover?"

Lord Wellington looked at the girl in amazement.

"I have?" he faltered.

No, Claude. You have been generously considerate of me while I have been an invalid, but now, I am well, and you need not fear to excite me. I love you, and I presume you are aware of it. Loving you, I want love in return. I don't want a brother's protecting love, nor a friend's affection, I want the love of a man for the one woman in the world for him. Am I the only woman in the world for you, my Claude," and she held out her little hands.

Remembering that he believed that the love of his heart was lost, Lord Wellington cried almost wildly, for he was as anxious to find comfort and happiness in her love as she:

"You are the only woman in the world for me," and bending his head would have kissed her on the mouth, but a servant announced:

"The Duke of Florence" and he turned back.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SECRET REVEALED.

In a fever of impatience, with her heart almost broken, Clarimonde had hurried as fast as trail and levis could carry her to the old home beside the Cayuga Bayou, arriving just as the silver path of tender moonlight opened across the river water. To her fevered brain this well remembered sight was like an opening into paradise, and her heart ceased so wonderously that she had no words to tell her story, only to break into relieving sobs as she fell into Madame Ormond's arms and lay motionless.

Like the nightingale know, as he opened his golden throat to welcome her, how she had feared the night would fall and the merciful bird understand that she needed his gay song? Did the flowers appreciate that of all the exquisite beauties she had seen in foreign lands, none in any way approached the simple, sweet, modest heads as she lay, helpless, worn out, in the arms of the woman who had been a mother?

If they did not, they were lacking that peculiar sense that is often attributed to them, for Madame Ormond believed that they welcomed her, and she clung, shuddering, to her breast. Behind she could remember, freeing from the cruel world, and Madame Ormond, sympathizing, not asking questions, but took her, not to the bedroom she had shared with Peace, but to another in the same wing, and there the old nurse faithful maid to bed, watched over her charge.

For days the brave girl struggled with brain fever, and there was a time when Madame Ormond thought each moment would be her last, but in time, by the most patient nursing, she brought the girl back into the land of the living once more, and Clarimonde, weak and worn, lay in her soft, white-robed girl, leaning back in a carriage with her lap full of crimson roses.

"Where is Peace? Are you false?" Madame Ormond asked tenderly.

"No, mother," Clarimonde replied, and the elder lady breathed more freely. A thought about Peace should have stolen Clarimonde's lover.

After the story was told, in all its painful incidents, Clarimonde began to better, although she was still weak, and she began to tal. Madame Ormond offered prayers, and summoned abroad. Madame Ormond often crept up to Clarimonde's room, and tried to to forget the few months she had known of another life and bury herself in the life of the past, when Clarimonde was not in the swamps of the Carolinas.

Peace was unconscious for poor Cl. months. As soon as she was well enough, she sent her maid to London, with letters to Claude, she felt, went her heart, although she endeavored to be brave. Day after day she filled her time in various manner and other things, took to reading in the library.

Here she day after day read the various old books, many of them green with dampness, she ran across the plan of the house. Study with her, as a means of passing the time, entered. It was marked on the plan:

"The Haunted Room."

In her dreary state, she felt anything was better than that, and she entered the room without saying anything, she began to look for the key to this room. The keys of each door hung in a small hall, directly across the front to back veranda. These halls were a third floor in all mansions, and also in Clarimonde in southern homes. On each side of the rooms, the two in front opening on the front veranda, the two in the rear upon the verandas in the rear. The "Chamber of Horrors," as it was called, was in the rear hall.

At first she did not find any key that would unlock the door, but presently she went a chamber never opened, but at last she found it hidden against the heavily carved door, and it only took it in her hands.

The poor child was only investigating to relieve her mind and drive her thoughts away from the terrible experience of her friend she thought false. The key was a heavy bronze affair, and on the handle was carved the words:

"The Chamber of Horrors."

She smiled like one who understood, and said to herself, smiling faintly.

"I wonder what is behind the door,' she thought, as, key in hand, she made her way to the massive black oak door.

She was not to understand, this girl who, before she was seventeen, had passed through many and strange adventures. Fearlessly, she inserted the key in the door, and softly turned the sparkling knob. At the instant she paused, deeply interested for the first time since she had learned of Peace's engagement, she opened and pushed open the door. That second there was a loud scream which rang through the house, and the sound of a falling body, after which all was silence.

The peculiarly interesting story will be continued in the Ledger issue of next week. The publishers of the Ledger do not print the story to its close. Remember that this paper will endeavor to publish the most exhorbingly interesting stories written in this country, and that with almost every issue a new and great piece of fiction is begun in these pages. It will richly repay you to take the Ledger regularly. Note the five premiums of cameras and patterns given to all subscribers, announced on pages thirteen and fifteen. If your subscription has expired, or will soon expire, we urge you to renew it at once before your name is stricken from our mailing lists. Remain one among the million readers of the Ledger and get the rattling good stories that are soon to appear in these pages.

Some of the fashionable ladies of Japan have their teeth gilded.

Stinging a Drummer.

"I thought I knew it all," confessed the drummer, "until I struck a little burg up in Maine about three weeks ago. I was condemned to spend two days there, and naturally gravitated toward the social and sociable center of the local option town—the drug store—where the thirsty villagers brought their loafers in order to make "Shake" well before taking."

"The druggist and I became pretty chummy after sunday trips to the back room, and as the villagers were as slow as a boy before going to school, I asked the pill roller if there was anything to whoop things up with a spell, same as we have between potato bugs."

"He said he 'but thar nothin' doin' 'ceptin' thet game o' chess th' old boy's playin' on my porch thar. Lem Jones may make him move in about an hour, but I reckon you wouldn't call thet excitin'."

"Not very," I said, picking up a millorder catalog.

"I got to," suddenly whispered the pill roller, with a cunning leer, but it ain't a game of chance—it's a dead sure thing. See how I raise the ante. Well, when no one ain't lookin' we'll put Betsy on th' scales an' weigh her."

"The cow weighed 1275 pounds and the shrewd druggist figured up the game that I should grow boastful before the crowd about my ability to guess the weight of this steer, and he was to be tapped and start the ball rolling by putting up a dollar bill that I could guess the weight of his cow."

"The preliminaries worked like a charm and in an hour the sons of toil dug down in their kicks and hauled an astonishing array of coin to the front

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It contains Six Candy Tablets of pleasant taste, almost as pleasant as Chocolate.

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Neither is it like Castor Oil, Glycerine, or other Oily Laxatives that simply lubricate the Intestines for transit of the food stopped up in them at that particular time.

* * *

The chief cause of Constipation and Indigestion is a weakness of the Muscles that contract the Intestines and Bowels.

Cascarets are practically to the Bowel Muscles what a Massage and Cold Bath are to the Athletic Muscles.

They stimulate the Bowel Muscles to contract, expand, and squeeze the Digestive Juices out of food eaten.

Cascarets do this naturally, without purging or discomfort.

They don't help the Bowels and Liver in such a way as to make them lean upon similar assistance for the future.

This is why, with Cascarets, the dose may be lessened each succeeding time instead of increased, as it must be with all other Cathartics and Laxatives.

* * *

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...By...
COLONEL PRENTIS INGRAHAM.

A WEST POINT CADET;

...Or...
A BOY'S FIGHT FOR FAME.

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CHAPTER I.

INSPIRED BY WEST POINT.

West Point, which means the United States Military Academy and its surroundings, was at its best. A battalion of West Point cadets were at full dress parade upon the plain. The grand old Hudson rolled its way toward the sea below the feet of the battalion of boys. On the other side the sun had sunk beneath the hills that cast the Military Academy and parade grounds in full shadow.

Beautiful West Point! There is no grander scene when nature is at its best, and man's handiwork has aided to make it all it has become, a most charming picture.

The battalion of six companies stood at dress parade before the Commandant of the Academy, his officers and the cadet officers. Save in size, the cadets all looked alike at a short distance. It was young manhood at its best. In full dress uniforms of grey, it was a fine crowd of each one of those cadets to do his best and look his best. A most impressive and inspiring scene it was to the spectator of from 10,000 to 20,000 at the spectacle. There was a solemnity about the scene that made all fell it.

Among the visitors were two persons with whom this story has to do. One of these persons was a slender, refined-faced, fine looking woman, under forty, and as she was dressed in deep black, a casual or unbeholder that death had visited her home.

By her side stood a manly boy, whose years might have been sixteen. He was well formed, graceful in movement, well dressed, and had a handsome face, full of manliness, determination and grit. His eyes flashed with martial feeling as he gazed upon the battalion of cadets, as though invited to the scene in his own happy open, and his whole face was buoyant with admiration and a sudden longing. He had gazed at every move of the battalion, had caught the quick, terse tones of the officer's command to the young soldiers, and there seemed within him a fire and feeling as though he longed to be one of those lads in grey and brass buttons.

Not a move of the splendidly drilled battalion escaped him, not a voice in command but he heard distinctly, and in low tones he explained to his mother, as though inspiring scene. No such scenes as the battalion of West Point cadets on parade, and the surroundings, can one behold the world over. Every man in grey understands the science of war, but he acted like a machine. The band marched down the line in front of the young soldiers, and as they breathed hard as he caught its inspiriting strains. Suddenly the boy's mother felt her mother's hand with a pressure that almost hurt her.

"Mother," he said in a low, determined voice, "this scene inspires me! I shall one day be a West Point cadet!"

"Ah, my son, that is not so easy to accomplish. The boy must be strong and of hardened kind of examinations, physical and mental, must be gone through with to make one of these young soldiers."

"Mother, I shall become a West Point cadet! I have resolved that I would and I now in all its worthlessness."

"Don't speak that way, Wallace, for you are not yet sixteen years of age!"

"Very true, mother, but I have lived sixteen years that have been long. From this day it shall be different with me!"

"Wallace, my son, you are young, for I have nothing to complain of against you." "I say my son because you are but a boy now. As the artist must be inspired before he can paint a great landscape, as the author must be inspired before he can write a book that makes one feel, I know now that a man must be inspired to make something of himself more than the ordinary being becomes. I feel that the whole force of my feet to the top of my head, heart and soul, to do something that will tell. I shall begin to fight for fame, and success crowns every atom of my brain."

"My son, your head is turned with this splendid parade. You will think different after we have gone home, my child."

"No, mother, my mind is made up, and has been for the last few minutes. See, the parade is ended. Let us watch the companies march away, then I will be content to go home."

"Yes, since we have ample time to catch the ferry, we will arrive home before it is very late."

"And I shall enter that home a different boy from what I left it, mother, I feel it. It was kind of you, mother, to bring me here, to keep me from brooding over father's death, for he was a father, brother and comrade to me, and I know all that he was to you. But he is gone, and I would that he could know the feeling that I now have to make a man of myself."

The mother of the youth seemed pleased at his words, and led the way down the long hillside toward the ferry. The boy, until he could see no more, had turned and glanced back at the cadets as they left the parade grounds. The visitors, who were glad to see the martial sight, were beginning to break up in squads to return to their separate homes.

Before the parade the mother and son had arrived in time to have a good look at the grounds of the Military Academy. Then it was that each place that he had at the buildings and all that he saw about him began to make their impress upon Wallace Prentis. It was the dress parade and the martial music that touched the key that inspired him. It was like an electric shock.

He had been a good boy, and aided both his father and his mother in all that he could do, was a passibly good student at the country school that he had attended, but it had not appeared to be in him to be other than the ordinary boy he came in contact with, until that afternoon's visit at West Point.

Beautiful West Point! Splendid battalions in grey! The strains of the band had acted upon him, indeed, like an electric shock.

Now he was full of thought, as with his mother he wended his way to cross the ferry, where they would take the train that would carry them to the little station a few miles from their home.

Mrs. Preston expected that her son would have much more to say on the subject of West Point, but was surprised to silence. On the contrary, he was silent. His eyes were turned upon the majestic Hudson, back on West Point, and the grandeur they were leaving behind, and when at last they were be settled, he did not know, but he was lost in thought, in contemplation. That he thought and hope had made a man of him.

He sat after the train had got the two off at the station, and they were driving home through the moonlight, that Wallace Preston said earnestly:

"Mother, I can get an appointment from the Congressional district if I prove that I am worthy of it in every particular, and of course we will have to send the best at our school in my studies, deportment and general character."

"But, my son, you have never been fond of your books, I have often sorrowed to know."

"I have not been, mother, I admit. I have been careless in the studies of my class, but that was in the past, and now I will be! I am determined to win success! See if I don't!"

Mrs. Preston bowed her head for an instant, and Wallace looking down saw that her handkerchief was pressed to her eyes. He put his arm around her tenderly, and then she said, as she drew her handkerchief back from her face:

"My son, I will tell you what I will do. I never before saw you so under the influence of a hope of any kind, and I would prefer that your father won my love and my hand from a man who has since risen high in the world, than to see you disappointed of our district, Honorable Lee Prescott. He is a man who has come to become my friend, wife, and told me that he would promise me to win for himself, but, Wallace, since I then loved your father and had to refuse a man who since then has never married for the reason, he told me, that he would die in his profession. He did so, becoming a very great man in reputation, and is today the congressman of our district. Although being his friend, I will even exert that I should go to him for a favor that I want done, but I will write to him and ask him if he will use his influence to appoint you to West Point.

"Oh, mother, will you do this for me?" cried the boy, joyously.

"Yes, my son, I promise you."

"Mother," Wallace spoke seriously, "I don't want you to do that, either. It is hard to ask a favor of the man whose love you refused in the long ago. I will speak to the teacher of our school, and see if he cannot influence Congressman Prescott to offer an appointment to the best scholar who examinations come. I believe that he would do this, and if he does, I shall be the best scholar. That I am determined upon."

The pleasant farm home of Mrs. Preston was reached, where she and her husband and son had dwelt happily together until a few months before, when Mr. Preston died. Since Mr. Preston's death, the mother and son had lived happily, but Mrs. Preston, anxious to shake off the sorrow her son seemed to be brooding upon, told him one day that she would take him to the West Point Military Academy, where he had often wished to go.

The day had been set when this promise would be kept, and as has been seen, the mother and boy were together to West Point, where the latter had been inspired with all that he had seen there, with the determination to enter that splendid school of a young soldier.

A youth of generous impulses, strong nature and determined will, Wallace Preston had made up his mind in an instant what he would do, and his mother was happy in the thought that he would become all that she could wish for him. His father had been a gallant soldier in the Civil war, and through him, Wallace had learned a great deal of the battles fought during the struggle between the North and the South. But it was West Point that inspired him, that awakened his energies and determination to no longer live, as it were, an aimless life. He had been inspired and by the thought of his mother's sacrifice of pride to write to Congressman Prescott in his behalf. He was determined that she should not do so. He would win his way by his own ability.

That night he retired to his pleasant room in his comfortable home—for his father had left himself and his mother a fair income to support them—and West Point filled through his dreams, each dream growing brighter and brighter as his brain and heart became more inspired to win a cadetship at the Military Academy of his country.

CHAPTER II.

A BOY'S PLUCK.

Vacation time of the Hillside school had been a gloomy one for Wallace Preston. He had deeply felt his father's death, and had endeavored to relieve his mother from all trouble. It was seeing how deeply Wallace felt his father's death that led his mother to grant to his inner wish that she had often expressed to go to West Point. It had been a day of happiness to Wallace Preston, so that Wallace had not missed any of his lessons through his joy in the thought of Academy. Bright as a silver dollar though he was, and clever, he had not liked study, though he was an omnivorous reader. Through his reading he had picked up a great deal of information, and also under the teaching of his father, who was a great scholar.

His father had made a good soldier during the Civil war and had learned both to use the rifle and revolver, and also a sword with great skill.

Thus it was Wallace had been brought up to understand all manly sports through his father's instruction, and became a rough athlete. He had learned to ride and drive, and considered that he had graduated in these things, if he had not graduated in books.

Then, however, the youth went back to the Hillside school the Monday after the visit to West Point, a wonderful change had come over him. He was determined to no longer be a drone at school. He went early that morning, and when the school was gone, went, for the school was two miles from his home, for the professor found that Wallace was surprised, when the class was called in which Wallace was one of the students, to find that the boy knew every lesson without a mistake.

Wallace had determined to begin at once on his new resolve, with the aim in view of being cadetship in the Military Academy. Not a lesson the first day did Wallace miss, and he went home in the evening much pleased with the discovery that he could learn easily if he set his mind upon it.

The professor and assistant teachers of the school, which somewhat interfered with the studies, and Wallace did not have an opportunity to secure a private conversation with Professor Hammond.

Thus several days passed away, and one evening when Wallace had made up his mind to speak to the Professor, who presided over the Hillside school, the class was kept in, which was a most unusual exception was Wallace Preston. He started homeward with a regret that he had been prevented from speaking to the Professor. He had not ridden far before he met on the way Zebulon Hurst, a trustee of the School Board of Hillside.

"Was the Professor gone, Wallace?" Mr. Burns asked.

"No, sir, he had to remain with the class that was kept in, and you will find him there."

"I am glad, for I have with me his month's salary to pay to him, and also the money for the additions and improvements to the school house, for the men will finish tomorrow, and I have here their bills, which the teacher is to pay in the morning."

"Professor Hammond is there, sir," said Wallace, and he went on his way toward his home.

Then the thought occurred to him, when Trustee Burns left the school, it was better of business. Professor Hammond would discuss the class, and he would be able to have a talk with him.

"I will return and see him, for he rides a part of my way homeward," muttered Wallace, his mind all taken up in his determination to interest the teacher in his desire to get an appointment to West Point for the best student in the school.

Turning his horse back, he rode slowly, as he wished Professor Hammond to finish with the Trustee by the time he got there.

It so happened that Professor Hammond had found that the class had studied their

lesson, and had recited perfectly, and by the time that Trustee Burns rode up they had been dismissed by the teacher.

Trustee Burns explained the nature of his visit, paid over the hundred dollars that was the salary of the Professor, and the four or five hundred that he was to pay out on the bills he left with him, and which were to be settled the following morning.

Trustee Burns then rode on his way home, while Professor Hammond put the money all away safely in his pocket, and, closing up the school house, was preparing to go also, when, at two doors, appeared human forms. It was a surprise to the teacher, more so, as he beheld in the hand of each man a revolver, and saw that he was covered by the weapons. At the same instant a voice behind him said:

"Don't throw your life away, but give up that money you have, and we will spare you."

Professor Hammond was a brave man, and he hesitated as to what to do. Though he did not see the third man who had spoken to him, he felt sure that he was covered by three deadly weapons. At the same time he realized that there was no possible escape from death if he refused to obey the bidding. The three men had him cornered, and they were doubtless men who knew that he had been paid the money by Trustee Burns, who had come there for the purpose of robbing him.

Just at that instant he heard the sound of hoofs outside. This gave him courage, and he called out:

"Ho, there! Come to my aid."

At the same instant he dodged down be-

He instantly took advantage to dart into the school.

hind his desk, but he did not dodge quickly enough to escape a shot that had been fired by one of the men. This shot wounded him in the arm, and he felt that he was helpless, for his arm dropped to his side.

The one who had arrived outside was none other than Wallace Preston. He rode his horse up to a tree and hitched him, while at the same time he discovered leaning against the tree a double-barrelled shotgun.

"Why, it's Harry Harkaway's gun, and he has gone off and forgotten it," cried Wallace, as he grasped the weapon.

Just at that instant he heard the teacher's call for help, and a moment after came the shot. Wallace bounded towards the door, and though it was gloomy within, he saw that there was trouble there. He instantly took advantage to dart into the large school room, and dodged down behind a desk just as three bullets tore along the top of it and passed over his head.

"Hold there!" he called out, and in tones that showed that he meant it, "for I am in this game."

A moment after Wallace realized that there were three men in the room besides the teacher. These three men he saw in the dim light, take refuge behind the school desks. From where they were prepared for deadly work, as had been shown by their shots at Wallace, they had not bounded into the room.

The teacher called out, as he had recognized Wallace, but was kept in hiding, for he did not wish to place himself at the mercy of the robbers.

"Don't expose yourself, Wallace, but if you can escape from here, ride for help!"

"I'll stand by you, Professor Hafmond, and we'll fight it out together!" was the plucky answer of the boy.

How Wallace intended to fight it out he was planning in his mind, for each one in the school at that time was protected by the desks, when without once more was heard hoofs approaching, and Harry Harkaway rode up to the door, and shouted out:

"What is the matter in there, for I heard firing?"

But one of the men from his position of hiding could see the one outside on horseback, and he aimed quickly at him and fired. The result was that his bullet struck the head of Harry Harkaway's horse, who dropped dead in his tracks, and the young rider was thus saved.

"Harry, the Professor is here, and so am I, and there are three robbers as well. I hold the fellows at bay with your shotgun, which I found under the tree. Take my horse and ride for help and lose no time!"

"I will do it!" shouted Harry, and he disappeared.

There followed a dead silence for a minute or more. Wallace's keen eyes were watching his foes. He had his hat upon the desk, and some books that he had gotten his hands upon. These he placed so that he could get a better view of his surroundings. He knew that Professor Hammond was unarmed, and was thus compelled to remain in hiding behind his own desk on the platform. He knew that the three men were not near either door, and one of them was down behind his own desk, while the other two were crouching in another part of the room, but also in concealment.

Wallace Preston's blood was up. He was in a fighting humor, and he planned quickly and well. He saw that he could, still carrying his gun, creep along the floor, and that the three men, from the position he wished to gain, would be held under his fire. His position was such that he could move about the room by keeping close to

These words came from Professor Hammond.

Wallace was going to say:

"I didn't kill him."

But he thought he would not thus give it away that he had fired only at the man's legs.

Gun in hand, he crept back to his first position near the door, and there sat down while he called out to Professor Hammond:

A Vindication for Dr. Pierce.

Decision by the Supreme Court of New York State, Against the Ladies' Home Journal.

A verdict has been rendered in favor of the plaintiff in the libel suit brought against the Ladies' Home Journal (published by the Curtis Publishing Co.) by the World's Dispensary Medical Association, of which Dr. R. V. Pierce is President. The suit was for $200,000 damages, and was brought by Doctor Pierce against the Curtis Publishing Company, for making false statements about one of his standard family medicines known as *Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription*. In the May number of the Ladies' Home Journal (published by the Curtis Publishing Co.) Mr. Edward Bok, the editor, stated that Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription contained alcohol and other harmful ingredients, and Dr. Pierce had in the action alleged that the defendant maliciously published this article containing such false and defamatory matter. Dr. Pierce further claimed that no alcohol in any form was contained in his "Favorite Prescription"; that said medicine was a vegetable preparation and contained no deleterious ingredients whatever; that Mr. Bok's statement, pretending to give some of the ingredients of said medicine, was wholly and absolutely false; and that by means of the publication of the article Dr. Pierce was injured in reputation and good name and credit as a manufacturer, to the extent of $200,000, for which amount of damages he brought suit. During the trial, the Vice-President of the World's Dispensary Medical Association stated, that the ingredients of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription were extracted from the following native roots: Golden Seal, Blue Cohosh, Lady's Slipper, Black Cohosh and Unicorn, by means of pure glycerine. He was asked how it knew, as a physician and experienced medical man, that the "Favorite Prescription" was a *cure* for the distressing ailments to women, such as leucorrhœa, amenorrhœa, dysmenorrhœa, ante-version, retro-version, and he stated that he knew such was the fact because of his professional experience and the many thousands of women whose ills had been cured by this "Prescription." This experience was corroborated by the standard Medical Authorities of the several schools of medicine endorsing the various ingredients in the strongest terms. The Vice-President, being asked to give authorities as to the value of the above roots, read from the standard works, such as the United States Dispensatory; The American Dispensatory; Organic Medicines, by Grover Coe, M. D.; Materia Medica and Therapeutics, by Professor Finley Ellingwood of the Bennett Medical College of Chicago.

From such authorities and his own professional experience he showed how the ingredients of this "Prescription" acted upon the female system, imparting increased power to the heart's action, and tone to the nervous system, and detailed its remedial influence in disorders of the female organs.

The retraction printed by the Curtis Publishing Company *two months after the libelous statement appeared* stated definitely that no apologies had been made at their request and that the "Favorite Prescription" did not contain either alcohol, opium or chloride. Many of the business of Dr. Pierce was injured from the effects of the publication of the original libel and the matter was brought before a jury in the Supreme Court of New York State who promptly rendered a verdict in the Doctor's favor.

GOLDEN SEAL ROOT.

Prof. Ellingwood, M. D., of Bennett Med. Col., Chicago, says of Golden Seal: "In its therapeutic remedial influence its widest range of action is upon the stomach, in functional disorders of that organ, where the entire apparatus, including the liver, is stagnant and *inactive*. It is *an important remedy in disorders peculiar to women*. In all catarrhal conditions, especially if there be much prostration and general enfeblement, it is useful."

BLACK COHOSH ROOT.

Prof. John King, in the American Dispensatory says: "This is a very active, powerful and useful remedy. * * * * * * It possesses an undoubted influence over the uterine system. In small doses the appetite and digestion are improved." He continues, "Upon the reproductive organs it exerts a specific influence, promoting the menstrual discharge.

"In action it slow, *but its effects are permanent*. It has been used successfully as an antispasmodic in hysteria, epilepsy when due to menstrual failings, puerperal convulsions, nervous excitability, and many other spasmodic affections."

LADY'S SLIPPER ROOT.

Edward M. Hale, M. D., Professor in Hahnemann Medical College, Chicago, says: "Useful in hysteria and in St. Vitus's dance), nervous headache, neuralgia and "blueness."

BLUE COHOSH ROOT.

The American Dispensatory says: "Blue Cohosh is used by Indian squaws, they employing a decoction of the root for two or three weeks previous to labor so *facilitate childbirth*."

Prof. John King, M. D., says: "It has been employed to relieve *irritation of the reproductive organs* dependent on congestion. It controls chronic inflammatory states of the organs and gives tone in cases of debility. *Chronic neuralgia, leucorrhœa, amenorrhœa (suppressed menstruation) and dysmenorrhœa (painful menstruation)* are conditions in which it has been most successfully employed."

UNICORN ROOT.

Dr. John Fyfe, Editor of the Department of Therapeutics in The Eclectic Review says of Unicorn root (*Helonias Dioica*) one of the chief ingredients of Dr. Pierce's "Favorite Prescription":

"A remedy which invariable acts as a uterine invigorator and always favors a condition in which the sexual sensitivity of the entire reproductive system, cannot fail to be of great usefulness and of the utmost importance to the general practitioner of medicine. I should not have a medicament which more fully answers the above purposes *from any other drug with which I am acquainted*. In the treatment of diseases peculiar to women it is seldom that a case is seen which does not present some indication for this remedial agent."

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We invite all those who would like to read more extended extracts from eminent medical authorities concerning ingredients of "Favorite Prescription," to send for a booklet recently issued by Dr. Pierce and published by the World's Dispensary Medical Association, of Buffalo, N. Y., which will be sent *free* to any one requesting a copy of the same by postal card or letter.

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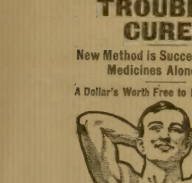

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"Professor, I hold the fort now, for I've got the drop on those fellows. Harry Harkaway will soon be back, and then we will have it coming our way."

"Yes, Wallace, if he rode to the Crossroads he would find several men there, and he must be back in a few minutes," was the answer of Professor Hammond, who continued:

"I was wounded at the first shot, and one arm if useless, but I don't mind that, if through your pluck we can catch those fellows."

Then followed a dead silence for long minutes, minutes that seemed half hours to Wallace Preston, but he kept his post and his gun ready. He knew that if the two men got a chance they would fire upon him. He also knew that there could be nothing but bird shot in Harry Harkaway's gun, which he held, but long range, if aimed at the right spot, could do deadly damage.

The powder flask and shot pouch had hung upon the gun when Wallace found it. He therefore took the two quietly and reloaded the barrel which he had fired; taking from the cap box in the butt of the shotgun, a cap, he fitted it in place and felt much relieved when he knew that he then had two shots.

The two men began to grow very nervous. In fact, one of them risked a shot through the hand hot resulting his revolver over the desk behind which he hid and firing several shots into the cabin that protected Wallace. The other did the same, thinking to scare the boy. But Wallace Preston laid low and bided his time. His ears were alert to the sound of coming aid, but his eyes and hands to the method of business.

"Let them shoot, Professor! They simply cut up the desk with their bullets."

A moment later the sound of voices was heard without, and Preston Wallace shouted aloud:

"Don't show yourselves, for now they must surrender! I will make one come out to me, and if he does not I will shoot for me to."

But at a dozen voices were heard cheering at this, and then followed again from Wallace Preston:

"You wounded fellow, there, quit playing 'possum, for you are not dead, and crawl out through the window to me!"

"I can't do it!" was the answer in a sullen tone.

"Do as I tell you, or I will give you another shot!"

"Don't, for I will obey!" was the answer, and the man crawled towards the door.

As he appeared on the outside two men without seized him by the arm and dragged him to one side of the door. Then Wallace Preston said:

"Now, one of you do the same. Leave your weapons and crawl out through the your apple cart if you do not!"

The two men thought better in a low tone, and one bt them said:

"You have got it on us this time, boy. Don't shoot as I give down my shotgun."

"And don't you come any funny business, or I'll shoot you as full of holes as a sieve!"

A man's form walked through the door of the school house and appeared with the other, and then Harry Harkaway cried:

"We have got him, too, Wallace!"

"Now, it is your turn, Harry! don't forget to leave your revolver!"

The third man rose from his crouching position and walked towards the door. He was about to step into the school room when dashed a half dozen forms. Harry Harkaway had found quite a group of men at the Crossroads, and they came rushing into the school house.

Professor Hammond rose from behind the desk and called out:

"Well, they didn't get the money or my life, but that brave boy, Wallace Preston, saved both."

Wallace sprang to his feet and, gun in hand, met the professor and those who had come there for a good time. The excitement was pale, but his wound was not serious, and he said that he could go on to the doctor's, who did not live far away, with Wallace Preston home.

Wallace Preston at once found himself a hero. Everybody grasped his hand, while Harry Harkaway said:

"I am more proud of my shotgun in your hands, Wallace, than I ever was in mine! It has done double duty for me, for I was unarmed, with a glance at his main horse pistol, which lay on the floor.

Wallace saw that the three men who had tried to rob Professor Hammond had been securely bound, and that he was wounded in the leg being also a candidate for the doctor's care. The men were taken to the school house from the Crossroads in a light wagon, and the wounded driver was at once taken in it to the doctor's. Professor Hammond stating that he could readily walk the distance, and as the man's wound was worse hurt than he was, the doctor could have the first attention.

"You take these other fellows to the village jail, Wallace, for you captured them," he added.

"No, if any of you are going in that direction, please inform the sheriff that there will be anxious if I remain longer from home."

He then handed Wallace a piece of paper and thanking him for it, telling him how he had found it.

"Yes, I had forgotten it," said Harry, "and left it standing against the tree. That is what brought me back to the school house, for I come quite a distance, you know, and bring the money for any game I can kill along the road."

"You must ride my horse, Professor Hammond, as far as the doctor's, and I'll go home and get a buggy and come back to carry you to your boarding place," said Wallace.

Thus it was decided, and the Professor, who was a little weak from the loss of blood, willingly mounted Wallace's horse, while the youth followed along behind on foot. When they arrived at the doctor's they found that the wounded robber's leg had been dressed, and it was the Professor's turn next.

"I will soon be back with a buggy to take you home, Professor," and Wallace rode rapidly away. Within half an hour the boy returned, having relieved his mother from all anxiety she might feel from his long stay from home, and as the Professor's wound had been dressed, he took him into the buggy and started homeward.

It was a fine chance, indeed, then, to tell Professor Hammond why he had returned to the school house to see him, but Wallace felt that it would be taking advantage of him to propose the matter at such a moment.

Leaving the Professor at his boarding place, he returned quickly homeward, knowing that his mother would feel anxious until he arrived.

On his way back he met the men who had carried the three robbers in the spring wagon to the village jail.

"You have all the pluck that one boy needs, Wallace," said one of them, "and through you those fellows are safely jailed, and I hope it will go hard with them. But you saved the Professor's life and the money, too."

Feeling that he had done the right thing in the right way, at the right time, Wallace Preston returned to his home happy in what he had accomplished.

CHAPTER III.

A REQUEST GRANTED.

The news of what Wallace Preston had done for the Professor had come to risk his life to go to the aid of Professor Hammond, and the story, with many exaggerations, went throughs the county like wild-fire. It got into the papers, and the story of the boy's luck was told and retold, and everyone had only words of highest praise for brave Wallace Preston. Harkaway also became in for some of the reflected light that fell upon Wallace, and he was highly praised it for his quicky way of bringing relief to the school house and those in danger there. Professor Hammond, being a rich man, not poor—quickly raised and bought for him a fine gold watch and chain and bridge.

Any intention on their part to reward Wallace Preston for his brave deed was quickly frowned upon by both the youth and his mother. They were not in need of any financial aid, and they cared not for any effort to show appreciation of the boy's deed. Wallace Preston felt happy over their cascading the loss of money, which, but for Wallace, Professor Hammond would have been robbed of. The Professor realized, more than any one else, that not only his life, but that of his family, had been in danger.

One of the robbers—the one that had been wounded, confessed that they expected that they would have to take the life of Professor Hammond to get the money. They were worthless characters, hangers-on in the county, and had learned that the money had been gotten from the bank by the Professor to pay his workmen his salary and the workmen for the additions to the school house.

Wallace took it all very modestly. He kept in mind, however, that he had not had the opportunity to tell Professor Hammond he had intended of the professor.

Matters moved rapidly away, and Wallace was considerably troubled about two things. He did not wish his mother to have any pride in having any favor of Congressman Prescott, whose love she had lost and whose friendship she had won, too, from the favor he had done Professor Hammond, but still he did not like to ask one something in gratitude for his protection of the teacher.

Wallace and his mother talked over the affair each night, and Mrs. Preston was determined that her son should not, should he be disappointed, she would make the request of West Point appointment from the Congressman.

Thus matters stood, when one day Professor Hammond appeared.

"Wallace, I wish you to remain after school, for I have something to say."

After school closed Wallace sat anxiously waiting until the last scholar had retired and the professor had come to him.

The boy had studied hard, indeed, and accomplished more than he had expected to do since his return from the Military Academy at West Point. He knew that the Professor had little complaint to find with him, had he desired to do so, as his conduct had been the best and his standing in all his classes. But he was a little anxious to know what interest with his teacher.

When the last scholar had left the school Professor Hammond walked down to where Wallace sat, and took the seat adjoining him.

"Wallace," he said, "you know how deeply grateful I feel you have done for me. I have been told—no matter by whom—that you intended to school the night of that intended robbery, not only for me, but for you, both were possible—to see me upon an important matter."

"There was but one, Professor Hammond, except my mother. I knew why I had returned to the school house."

"Well, you are a good guesser. I will tell you that I know Harry Harkaway."

I am sorry that you know, sir, for after it was all over I intended to ask you what I did. I hesitated in asking a favor."

"Which I will be glad to be granted before asked. Tell me what your request is, and I may understand it fully from your own lips."

Wallace's face flushed, and for a moment he was silent, then said:

"Well, Professor, as the secret is out, ever since I went to visit West Point with my mother I have had a different look on it. Before that time I believed that all boys had to take things as they came to them, that a boy did not have the carving out of his own fate. Since that time I have changed my mind completely. I know that it depends upon a boy to make or mar his future; that is, if there is anything in him. I never was a hard student, as you know well," and Wallace smiled.

"I have not that complaint again you now, my boy, for you have been most studious and determined to win the head of your classes, and you are going to the front nobly, day after day."

"That is what I am striving for, sir. My father left mother and myself beyond want. His death was a great blow to both of us but it left me the man of the house and my mother's protector, and I wish to prove that there is something in me."

"There is, indeed, Wallace, and you will win the success that you are looking for now with all your heart and soul."

"Thank you, sir. Your encouragement helps me greatly. But what I want to ask of you, Professor Hammond, is that I have seen it stated upon good authority that a Congressman in a State has the right to appoint a boy in some leading school who stands best in his classes and in deportment to a cadetship at West Point. An examining board is selected by the Secretary of War, if the school does not hold such a position that its name is a guarantee that its examination will be satisfactory. Now, Congressman Prescott is the one representing us in this district, and I believe that if you would go to him and make the request, he would appoint the best scholar in this school to a cadetship at West Point."

"Yes, Wallace, I have no doubt he would if it is properly brought before him; but at the same time, if you were a competitor for the cadetship you would have to stand your chances before the Examining Board with a number of other students, as I happen to know there are ten to a few who would like the same appointment."

"I know that, sir."

"It might be therefore, that you would fail of success; that some of them would stand better than you, and in that case I think it better that I should go to Congressman Prescott and make the request of him to give you the appointment, especially as your pluck as a boy in aiding me has been brought to his notice."

"Oh, no, sir; no, sir!" said Wallace, eagerly, "I prefer to be left entirely in the matter, and I particularly ask you that you do not mention it to Congressman Prescott. I will take my chances, for I am determined to win, and when the day of examination comes I will be on hand with other comers, and abide by the result."

"Your request is granted, my boy. I will grant your request. I will write Congressman Prescott now and will do all in my power to aid you in your studies and to force you to the front."

"I think you, Professor, for your great kindness, and I will take advantage of your offer to help me when I need it."

This was the reason, on account of what he had heard from Harry Harkaway, that Professor Hammond was so anxious Wallace to remain after school.

Professor Hammond granted his request, which it had really pleased him to make. Wallace Preston hurried home with a happy heart. With his mother's aid—for she had a superior education—and his own exertions in his studies, he determined to win. He did not doubt that he would win the prize that he headed for.

He told his mother of his remaining to see Professor Hammond, and she was willingly entered into the spirit of his wishes, and said she would do all she could to aid him. Wallace knew, and who had entered the Military Academy before, and for him all the particulars as to what studies were required for him to undertake to pass a successful examination. The letter was written that night and dispatched the next day.

The letter from Professor Hammond to Congressman Prescott was well written, and smiled that night.

The following night came Professor Hammond again detained Wallace Preston after school.

"Wallace, my boy," he said, "I wrote the letter we decided upon and I have Congressman Prescott's reply. Let me tell you, however, beforehand, I have noticed all this week how devoted you are to your studies, and I am confident you will win your way. You are not like the boy you were a few months ago."

"Thank you, sir," said Wallace, and he anxiously waited for the Professor to read the letter that he had received from Congressman Prescott.

The letter had been replied to immediately, and it stated that the Congressman was glad, indeed, to make the appointment to the best scholar in the Hillside school when the examination should take place. He had taken pleasure in doing so, as he had at first not visited it. He had granted the Professor's request, and he would write to visit the school and make the announcement of the appointment, feeling sure the boy who would prove himself capable of winning it.

This letter made Wallace extremely happy. He did not take into consideration the heavy task that he would have to do to get that cadetship. He was glad of the chance, and would study hard. He rode home in a happy mood, and told his mother all over where his mother sat with the words:

"Mother, Congressman Prescott grants the request. I will get the appointment!"

Another installment of the capital story, increasing in interest, will appear next week's Ledger. All readers desiring our free coupon, which explains the conditions named in our advertisements on another page, should call at our office or advise you to subscribe for the Ledger at once and secure the remainder of this thrilling narrative and many other good stories that will soon appear.

His Darling Honey.

A New Hampshire newspaper man visited a negro camp, and at one of the hotels he was served with some honey, detectable by his taste. On his next trip to the city he was accosted by the boy in charge of the same hotel, with visions of the same honey. It did not appear, however, and, beckoning to a waiter, he said:

"Say, Sam, where is my honey?"

He was almost paralyzed when that worthy grinned and replied:

"She done!" work here no more, she did done got a job at the silk-mill!"

The wife received a handsome new dress before they returned home, after making a solemn promise not to tell the story.

A MINER'S PRAYER.

The scene is a mining camp. On a rude cot rests a plain, blunt man, who will not long trouble the world.

It is plain to be seen that Billy is dying. He implores some one to pray; and here comes a most painfully humorous scene in which one type of American humor is exhibited in its perfection.

The boys looked sorrowful. If gold dust could have bought prayers, Billy would have had a first-class assortment in an instant.

"There's Deacon Adams over to Patten's," suggested a bystander; "an' they do say he's a reg'lar riproarer at prayin'. But I'would take four hours to go and fetch him."

"Too long," said the doctor. "Down in Mexico they pray for a feller after he's dead, an' they say it's jist the thing—sure pop. I'll give yer my word, Billy, an' no go back, that I'll see the job done up in style fir yer, of that's any comfort."

"I want to hear it myself," groaned the sufferer. "I don't feel right. Can't nobody pray—nobody in the crowd?"

Finally matters were brought to a crisis by Mose—no one knew his other name.

Mose uncovered a sandy head, with the back of his hand rubbed his bronzed face, then stroked his sandy beard, and immediately remarked:

"I don't want to put on airs in this here crowd, but of nobody else can say a word to the Lord about Billy Bent, I'm a-goin' to do it myself. I'm a heathen I've never been in, but there's nothin' like tryin'. This meetin' must now come to order at wunst."

"Hats off in church, gentlemen!" commanded Pentecost.

Off came every hat and some of the boys knelt down as Mose knelt beside the cot, and said:

"Oh, Lord, here's Billy Bent needs 'tendin' to. He's penned out his last dust, an' he seems to have a purty clear idee that this is his last chance. He wants you to give him a lift. Lord, an' it's the opinion of this house that he needs it. "Tain't none of our business what he's done, and if it was, you'd know more about it than we do 'cept yer. But it's mighty surtin that a cuss that's been in the diggin's fur years needs a sight of mendin' up before he kicks the bucket."

"That's so," responded two or three, very emphatically.

"Billy's down, Lord," resumed Mose, 'un' no decent looking man believes that the Lord 'ud hit a man when he's down. So there's one of two things got to be done—either he's got to be let alone, or he's got to be helped. Lettin' him alone won't do him or anybody else any good, so helpin's the holt. An' as enny of us tough fellers would help of we knew how to, it's only fair to suppose that the Lord'll do it a mighty sight quicker.

"Now, what Billy needs is to see the thing in that light, an' you ken make him do it if good deal better than we ken. It's mighty little fur the Lord to do, but it's meat, and drink, an' clothin' to Billy jist now. When we wus boys, some of us read some promise of your'n in that Book that wus writ a good spell ago by chaps in the Old Country, an' though Sunday school teachers and preachers mixed it matter up in our minds, and got us all tangle-footed, we know them promises are thar, an' you know what we mean.

"Now, Lord, Billy's jest the boy. He's a hard case, so you can't find no better stuff to work on—he's in a bad fix, an' we can't do nothin' fur him, so it's jest yer chance. He ain't exactly the chap to make a Number One Angel of, but he ain't the man to forget a friend, so he'll be a handy feller to have around.

"Feel sny better, Billy," said Mose, stopping the prayer for a moment.

"A little," answered "but you want to tell the whole yarn. I'm sorry for all the wrong I've done.

"He's sorry for all his devilitry, Lord—" "Ain't I ain't got nothin' agin' the Judge," continued the sufferer.

"An' he don't bear no malice agin' the Judge, which shoulder it—seein' he generally give as good as he took. An' the long and short of it, Lord, is jest this, he's a-dyin', an' he wants a chance to die with his mind easy; an' nobody else ken make it so so we leave the whole job in your hands, only puttin' in fur Billy's comfort that we recollect hearin how yer wunst forgive a dying thief, an' thet it ain't likely yer a-goin' to be harder on a chap that's always paid fur what he got. That's the whole story. Amen."

Billy's hand, rapidly growing cold, reached for that of Mose, and he said, with considerable effort:

"Mose, yer came in as handy as a nugget in a gone-up claim. God bless yer, Mose! I feel better inside. If I get through the clouds, an' hev a livin' chance to say a word to them as is the chiefs up thar, that word'll be fur you, Mose. God bless yer, Mose! an' if Jack Slessin's no account, it can't cuss yer, anyhow. This claim's washed out, Mose, but I've given the last shoveiful to see if there's eny gold in it or not!"

And Billy departed this life, and the boys drank to the repose of his soul.

"Almost Treated."

Two Germans were on their way to work, when one of them, Hans, observed their countryman, Schnider, on the other side of the street, sweeping the walk in front of his saloon.

"Adolph," said Hans, pointing to the saloon man, "look at Schnider doing his own schweeping. By golly, he is der meanest and stingiest man vat ist."

"No," returned Adolph, "he is not so stingy as you t'ink. He almost treated me vonce."

"How do you make dot out?" questioned Hans. "How could he almost treated you vidout doing it?"

"Vell, dat happened dis vay," said Adolph. "Vone cold morning I dropped into Shnider's place und sat me down by der fire for a little varmness, und Schnider vas cleaning der bar up. He tooked all der bottles from der shelves, viped dem clean, und sat dem on der bar; den he tooked der glasses off, und did likewise; after dot he viped der shelves off, und put der clean bottles und glasses back. Ven dis vork was finished he looked over to me und says: 'Vel, Adolph, vat are we going to have?' Und vust as I vas going to say 'beer,' he says, 'vails or snow?' "

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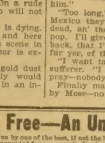
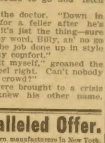
5348 FANCY YOKE BLOUSE 32 TO 40 BUST


5349 GIRL'S SAILOR SUIT 6 TO 12 YEARS


5330 SHIRT WAIST WITH ELBOW SLEEVES 34 TO 42 BUST

5308 INFANT'S WRAPPER ONE SIZE

5333 SEVEN GORED SHIRT 22 TO 32 WAIST

5334 LINGERIE BLOUSE 34 TO 40 BUST

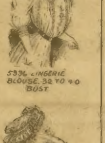
5347 YOKE AND BODICE GIRDLES, SMALL, MEDIUM, LARGE

5335 CORSET COVER 32 TO 42 BUST

5340 LINGERIE HATS IN TWO STYLES ONE SIZE

5346 NINE GORE PRINCESS SHIRT 32 TO 42 WAIST

5343 TUCKED LINGERIE BLOUSE, 32 TO 40 BUST

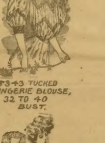

5339 SIX GORED SHIRT, 22 TO 42 WAIST.

5337 PONY JACKET 32 TO 40 BUST

5342 BREAKFAST JACKE., 32 TO 42 BUST

5341 TUCKED YOKE BLOUSE 32 TO 42 BUST

5338 CHILD'S DRESS 2 TO 10 YEARS.


5344 GIRLS SECTIONAL TUCKED DRESS, 6 TO 12 YEARS.

5312 GIRLS CAPE, WITH HOOD 4 TO 13 YEARS.

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

THE SMALL BOY'S COMPLAINT.

My mother makes me awful mad,
I wisht she'd let me be.
But, dern the luck, she seems to think
That she's a-runnin' me.
Now, here I am dressed like a dude,
At this here dancin'-school;
I might look clean an' sporty, but
I feel jest like a fool.

The other kids keep guyin' me,
Because I come down here;
Seeh things as "girly boy" an' "dude"
They holler in my ear.
Course, I can't blame 'em, 'cause I do
Look mushlike, an' yer
If they don't cut that guyin' out,
I'll punch some heads, I'll bet.

They ain't no fun in buggin' girls,
But what else kin I do,
With mom a-settin' lookin' on?
Dog-gone it, I feel blue.
Mom says I'll be a gentleman
In years that is to come.
If she keeps sendin' me down here
I won't—I'll be a bum.

Handsomest or Most Handsome.

Perhaps you are sometimes bothered about the right form of the adjective "handsome" in the superlative degree; many persons are, thinking that the word should be compared, handsome, more handsome, most handsome, because it has two syllables. The general rule is that adjectives of more than one syllable are compared in that way, but this is one of the exceptions—it is a disputable ending in mute e," and is, therefore, compared as if it were a word of two syllables. Remember all these little things, and they will aid you in acquiring a thorough knowledge of our language—the best capital you could have for any vocation in life.

Amusing Mistakes.

Teacher—Now, boys, who can give me the definition of the word census?

Cyril—Scases are what left Tommy Jones when he was struck with a brick.

"I think," said little Elizabeth, who was studying her geography lesson, "that if Worcester" should be called "Wooster," Rochester should be called Rooster."

Little Olive was telling her mother about a lady whose hat had been blown off by the wind, when her little brother, overhearing her, said:

"And all her clothespins (hatpins) were lost!"

John had accidentally upset a dish of stewed prunes.

"Isn't that lucky?" he exclaimed.

"What do you mean by its being lucky?" asked his mother, who would hardly have described it in that way.

"Why, it's lucky I don't like prunes," explained John.

Snow at Halfpenny a Pound.

Snow is sold in the north of Sicily, where it fetches about a halfpenny a pound. It is a government monopoly, and the Prince of Palermo derives the greater part of his income from it. The snow, which is gathered on the mountains in felt-covered baskets, is carried to the cities for refrigerating purposes.

Why Iron Ships Float.

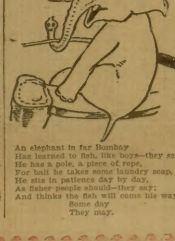
Many boys and girls find it hard to understand why a big ship floats, as iron is much heavier than water. And nobody can blame them, for the problem is sometimes very perplexing even to grown people. The law of specific gravity explains it. A solid may float or sink in the same liquid, according to the form the solution is made to assume. A cubic inch of iron weighs about seven and one-fourth times as much as a like bulk of water, and will therefore sink in water. But if the cubic inch of iron be beaten out into a vessel containing more than seven and one-quarter cubic inches, it will float, because it will then be lighter than an equal bulk of water.

YOUTHFUL CANDOR.

Visitor—And why are you not out playing with the other children?

Joan—Oh, I was naughty yesterday and so sister said she'd punish me by making me entertain you while she is dressing.

FISHING.



An elephant in far Bombay
Has learned to fish, like boys—they say.
He has a pole, a piece of rope,
For bait he takes some laundry soap,
He sits in patience day by day,
As fisher people should—they say;
And thinks the fish will come his way,
Some day
They may.

HER BANTAM

She set her little bantam hen
On a full dozen big white eggs;
And laughed for joy, thinking when
They all hatched out, two more than ten
Would dot the chicken around that pen
Would run on lovely yellow legs;
And all those chicks would be her own!
And by and by, when they were grown,
Twelve nice, big eggs these hens would lay,
And she would grow rich right away.
A-selling twelve fresh eggs a day!

That cunning bantam hen did sit
On full a dozen round white eggs;
At hatching time, one draggled pet
Out of his little shell did get,
And struggled feebly to his legs!
The shell was hard but he was game,
And it did crack, by, all its name!
His ma—as proud as a hen could be—
Clucked as though he were nine quite three;
And Flo danced round him in a ring,
Shouting: "Ah—o! you dar-ar-ling thing!"
So I don't count that chick aught
That eleven eggs had come to naught!

Her Reason.

Mistress—Why, Bridget, you surely don't consider those eggs fresh?

Bridget—Sure, I washed 'em nicely on the inside, mum, so ye can look out; but I intentionally left them a little dirthy on the outside as thim nasty Jones children next door couldn't look in.

SUSAN'S PERPLEXITY.

I wonder what the spider spied,
And just what sighs the cider sighed,
And what is in the willow's wail,
And has the pillow got a pill;
I wonder what the seaweeds see,
And if a bullock has a key.
I wonder all day long, O, dear,
At many other things as queer.

A GOOD NIGHT THOUGHT.

Whene'er I go to bed at night
I shut my eyes up very tight,
And try to get to sleep real fast,
So that the night will soon be past.

The night would be real nice, I think
If it were not as black as ink;
And if it only made a noise,
It would be better for us boys.

But it's so dark, and silent, too,
A boy would not know what to do
If he was out in it, so I
Am glad that in my bed I lie.

So just before I go to sleep
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,
And then I make a prayer, you know,
For boys who have no beds to go.

CAN YOU READ THIS STORY OF LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD?

CHAPTER XIII

Solution of Chapter XII.

The wicked wolf made haste to slip on Granny's cap and spectacles and night dress and lie down in bed, intending to deceive the little girl; for, he feared if she saw him when she first opened the door she would scream out, and the woodman would hear her. So he thought he would wait until she came in, and got in bed.

Just then Red Riding Hood tapped on the door.